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A

COURSE OF LECTURES,

ILLUSTRATIVE

OF THE

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PILGRIM'S PROGRESS:

DELIVERED AT THE

TABERNACLE, HAVERFORDWEST.

BY DANIEL WARR.

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"Revere the Man, whose PILGRIM marks the road,
And guides the PROGRESS of the soul to God."—COWPER.

SECOND EDITION.

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TO THE

CHURCH AND CONGREGATION

OF THE

TABERNACLE, HAVERFORDWEST;

TO

THE ESTEEMED FRIENDS

WHOSE NAMES ARE ATTACHED TO THIS VOLUME,

AND TO ALL

WHO ADMIRE THE WRITINGS AND REVERE THE MEMORY

OF

JOHN BUNYAN,

THESE LECTURES

ARE

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

When the Author commenced the delivery of the present Lectures, it was under the fullest conviction that the Pilgrim's Progress contained matter of the most interesting description, and which patience and research only could disclose. He, therefore, entered upon his work with a solemn determination to obtain, if possible, a knowledge of Bunyan's meaning; and, in simplicity and sincerity, to lay it before his hearers. The farther he prosecuted his research, the more he was led to admire the execution and design of the work itself,—Bunyan's knowledge of human nature, his ability in detecting and exposing error, and his clear and simple statement of many essential Gospel truths.

Judging from the growing attendance upon the Lectures that they were acceptable, and might prove useful, he began to listen with some degree of attention to several entreaties made by his friends to publish them. Being, however, busily employed by day in his school, and generally engaged in the evening in preaching, he found his difficulties increase as he reflected upon them, and for some time abandoned all idea of publishing.

A combination of circumstances led him to this conclusion,—two of which he may be permitted to mention. He remembered that he was a mere novice in writing, his literary labours having never produced more than a Sunday School Reward Book. His assurance, therefore, must have been very great, in daring to think of meeting the public with an octavo volume in his hand. For, although he felt satisfied that his obscurity would sufficiently shelter him from the attacks of criticism, still he was aware that whatever pledge he might give to kind and valued friends he was bound in duty and honour to redeem, by presenting them with a course of Lectures that would at once interest and profit them. Another serious consideration

was the risk almost inseparable from publication. His expectations, though sanguine, were liable to disappointment; and, failing in his application for subscriptions, he might plunge himself and a numerous family into a distress, at once fatal to his peace, and injurious to his usefulness as a minister.

When, however, these circumstances had received all the consideration which their importance demanded, two encouragements presented themselves to his mind, and enabled him to commence, and complete in the fear of God, the present work. The first was, a humble reliance upon the assistance of the Holy Spirit, in the prosecution of his undertaking; and the second, an unshaken confidence in the kindness of those friends to whom he might feel warranted in applying for their patronage and support. Nor has he been disappointed. With the profoundest reverence he desires to acknowledge the enlightening and comforting influences of the Spirit of truth, in whose fear he has endeavoured to speak and to write. While, with every expression of gratitude for the kindness with which his applications for the names of his friends were received,—for the promptness and cheerfulness with which they were given,—and for the many wishes and blessings with which they were accompanied, he desires to return his unfeigned thanks, and thus publicly to acknowledge his sense of their kindness.

For the Lectures themselves he has but little to say. Should they be read with the interest that was taken in their delivery,—should they contribute, in the smallest degree, towards the advancement of truth, and towards the wider diffusion of Gospel light,—should their tendency be the strengthening of the weak, and the encouragement of the timid,—the reformation of the wicked, and the consolation of the righteous;—then shall he not have laboured in vain, nor have reason to say that his labour has been without its reward.

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LECTURES.

LECT. I.

Introduction—Nature and Design of the Pilgrim's Progress—State of a convinced Sinner described —Character of Evangelist, and his Conversation with Christian.

In the exercise of that sovereignty which alone belongs to God, the feeblest instruments have been employed for the accomplishment of his greatest purposes.

The foolishness of preaching has overcome the wisdom of the world: the pride of intellect, the strength of custom, and the influence of prejudice, have, by turns, yielded to the artless persuasions of men who preached Jesus Christ crucified.

However pleasing it may be to hear of the consecration of wealth, of talent, or of influence, to the service of the Redeemer's cause, it should be borne in mind that neither of them is essential to its prosperity; for, however it may have pleased God occasionally to employ them in some great work, he has not unfrequently passed them by; and, calling from obscurity some poor

man, he has enriched him with the gifts, and blessed him with the graces of his Holy Spirit: this he has done, that when the work should appear complete in all its parts, and should have answered every purpose for which it was made,—that then God, and not man, might have the praise.

Such a man was John Bunyan, and such the imperishable work which will form the basis of the present and succeeding Lectures.

As it is not my intention to give even an outline of his life, I shall merely observe, that he became a member of the Baptist church, at Bedford, in the year 1655; then under the pastoral care of Mr. Gifford. Shortly after this he was invited by his fellow-members to speak at their private societies. After a suitable time he was solemnly set apart to the work of the ministry, and continued preaching until the year 1660, when he was apprehended, and at Bedford quarter sessions was tried upon an indictment in which he was charged "with devilishly and perniciously abstaining from coming to church, and for being a common upholder of several unlawful meetings and conventicles, to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom, contrary to the laws of our sovereign lord, the king, &c." Upon these charges he was found guilty, and sentenced to perpetual banishment; a sentence which, although never fully executed, was sufficient to keep him for twelve years a prisoner in Bedford jail. It

was during this imprisonment that the interesting book was written, which bears the name of the Pilgrim's Progress, the design of which appears to be fourfold :—

I. To show the various states of mind through which a Christian passes, from the commencement of a work of grace in his soul, to the completion of that work in heaven.

II. To lay open the professing world, and to exhibit those persons who, from various motives, are induced to profess Christianity.

III. To describe the enemies of the Christian church, as well as the encouragement believers have to meet them.

IV. To state most of the leading truths of the Gospel, and thus to furnish a test for genuine Christian experience.

Men of all denominations, holding the essential truths of the Gospel, have acknowledged the coincidence between the experience of Christian and their own ; they have tried the Pilgrim's Progress by the Word of God, and have found it bearing the closest analogy to it : is it, therefore, too much to say, that so long as God shall have a tried, a tempted people in the world, so long will the Pilgrim's Progress continue a blessing to them ?

The style in which it is written is *allegorical*, a mode of writing peculiarly adapted to the times in which the author lived, as enabling him to address the people of God in a language that

his enemies could not legally call him to an account for; a language, the spiritual meaning of which the people of God would at once understand and enjoy. Most of the characters are *real;*— several of them it has been our lot to associate with, and some of them we have found it our duty to separate from.

The work opens with comparing the world to a wilderness, in which was a den: in that den the author laid down; and, falling asleep, he dreamed that he saw a man, whose clothes were exceedingly ragged; his back was towards his own house, a book was in his hand, a heavy burden was on his back; he opened the book, and, beginning to read, he wept, and trembled, and at length cried out, "What must I do to be saved?"

The den was Bedford jail. His sleep was his captivity. The man whom he saw was a convinced sinner, whose name was *Christian;* prior to this it had been *Graceless.* His clothing was his own righteousness, which he had formerly trusted to. The book he held in his hand was the holy law of God. The burden was the recollection of his past sins. The cause of his distress was his condemnation for sin; and his cries and tears proceeded from his ignorance of the way of salvation through the blood of the cross. Such is the state of a *convinced sinner.* After a life of carelessness and folly, his eyes are opened to the misery and degradation of his condition; he is as much ashamed of his own

righteousness now, as formerly he was proud of it. The law condemns him; guilt presses hard upon him; hell from beneath seems moved to meet him. He feels a misery he never felt before; and in the bitterness of his soul cries out, "What must I do to be saved?"

If such is the misery of a man within the reach of mercy, and to whom offers of salvation are made, what must be the misery of him, upon whose soul lies the seal of eternal perdition; the dread secrets of whose prison-house have never been disclosed; but who, in the warning voice of prophecy, is described as the prey of a worm that never dies, and as suffering a fire that will never be quenched!

Christian was both a husband and a father; and, from the circumstance of his back being towards his house, we are left to infer the ignorance of his family, as to the cause of his distress. Such was the case: they were amazed at his conduct; some thought him mad, and got him to bed, thinking that rest would restore him; others laughed at him, probably for a fool, to be so much concerned about religion; few could pity, and none could relieve him; he therefore retired, and spent much of his time in solitude and prayer.

In the state of mind already described, worldly relatives can neither relieve our distresses, nor be persuaded of the cause of them; they imagine that time and amusements will heal the mind, and restore the sufferer to his wonted tranquillity;

failing; however, in this, the man convinced of his state as a sinner before God, receives the pity and advice which are usually offered to fools and madmen.

I recollect once conversing with a pious female who, when young, was in this state of mind. She waited upon a minister, whose name I withhold; he invited her to return in the evening; she did, and was requested to take a hand at cards, with the assurance that they were the finest things imaginable for such cases as hers. This was declined, and she waited upon a second minister, who enquired what books she had lately read: "Hervey's Theron and Aspasio," was the reply. "Bad books, very bad books indeed," said the inquirer, gravely shaking his head. "My dear young lady," he most feelingly continued, "I am not surprised at the state of your mind, after reading the pernicious books you have mentioned: be assured, they are unfit for such tender minds as yours; but go home, and I will send you some that I can safely recommend." He kept his word; for shortly after he sent her the History of Tom Jones, and the Vicar of Wakefield!

Every case of religious distress has not been treated with the tenderness of the one recorded. A young lady, well known to the writer of these pages, was under great distress of mind; she was observed at times to retire for the purpose, as was supposed of prayer. Her pa-

rents thought that severity would prove the most effectual mode of relief, and therefore, during the whole of a severe winter, they shut her up in a mad-house.

Such are too often the conclusions of those who, strangers themselves to the power of divine grace, are not aware that deep and continued sorrow, a distaste for the follies formerly enjoyed, and an earnest desire for pardon, are inseparably connected with convictions of the evil of sin. Let him, whose case has been thus described,—who feels the burden, and dreads the curse of sin,—who sighs for deliverance, while with sorrow he turns from the recollections of the past,—let him trust in the name of the Lord; let him rest assured that help is nigh, and that the time is at hand, when his sorrow shall be turned into joy.

Returning to Christian, we still find him in the fields, reading, weeping, and crying, "What must I do to be saved?" Like a man conscious of danger, without knowing how to escape from it, he looked in every direction, and at length saw a man coming towards him. As the stranger drew nigh, he inquired into the cause of Christian's distress, and received for answer, "By the book in my hand, I find that I am condemned to die: that after death I am to appear before God in judgment: I am unwilling to do the first, and unable to do the second."

The name of the inquirer was Evangelist, *a faithful preacher of the Gospel:* and who under-

took to answer the question, "What must I do to be saved?"

His first business was, to give Christian a piece of parchment, on which was written, "Flee from the wrath to come;" and his second, to point to a wicket gate, which stood at the extremity of a wide field. When Christian had read the parchment, he naturally asked, "Where am I to fly?" Evangelist replied, "Do you see yonder shining light?" "I think I do," was the answer. "Then," continued Evangelist, "keep that light in view, and go directly to it; you will then see the gate, at which, when you knock, you shall be told what you are to do." They parted; and the first question that presents itself to our mind is, What does this parchment roll signify? It was, probably, the text of the first Gospel sermon that reached the case, and directed the mind of Christian. It might have been a verbal advice, which Evangelist could safely offer; or a passage of Scripture occurring in a sermon, which, suiting his case, might induce Christian to listen with increased attention, until the subsequent directions of Evangelist satisfied him that God in an especial manner had interposed, by directing him into the way of salvation.

The wide field is a general profession of the Gospel, beyond which we must go, ere we can be saved. The light is the Gospel, which alone reveals the Lord Jesus Christ as the way to God, and who is here emphatically described

as the Wicket Gate; according to his own declaration: "I am the door; by me if any man enter, he shall be saved."

In closing this Lecture, permit me to offer the following advice. Let no one mistake convictions of sin for conversion *from* sin. Many a wicked man has been made to tremble under the Gospel; outward reformation has, for a season, been its consequence; the impressions have at length been effaced; and a return to former habits has proved, how much beyond conviction is conversion. On the contrary, let no one suppose that his heart has been changed without them; it is the sick, and not the whole, that need the Physician. "I came," said the Saviour, "not to call the righteous, but *sinners* to repentance."

LECTURE II.

Departure of Christian from the City of Destruction—Efforts made to bring him back—Characters of Obstinate and Pliable—Description of the Slough of Despond—Character and Advice of Worldly Wiseman.

THE Jews must have regarded our Lord with considerable surprise, when he said, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." He certainly could not

intend, that the destructive feeling of hatred should be cherished against those whom we were bound to love; but that, in the prosecution of our journey to the eternal world, the sympathies of our nature, and the ties of consanguinity, *must* be disregarded.

This was Abraham's glory, when, as he was journeying to Moriah, he turned a deaf ear to the pleadings of nature, although Isaac was the child of his old age,—the child of promise, and the germ of future blessedness to all the nations of the earth; all was lost, or all forgotten, in the one command—"Go, offer him there for a burnt-offering, upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Thus Christian, in his race for the crown of glory, closed his ears against the cries of wife, children, and neighbours, exclaiming as he ran, "Life, life, eternal life!!"

Such was the result of Evangelist's advice to Christian, and with which we closed the preceding Lecture. We have now to contemplate him as commencing his journey, and it will be our privilege to accompany him throughout. May the grace and strength afforded him, be imparted to us; may the golden gates of Paradise be thrown wide open as we approach them; while, from the eternal throne, the voice of God shall welcome us to those mansions of blessedness, which he has prepared for them that love him!

The departure of Christian from the city

of Destruction excited considerable ferment among part of its inhabitants. Some of them mocked, others threatened, and some cried after him to return. Among these were two who went after him, determined, if possible, to bring him back. Their names were *Obstinate* and *Pliable*: the one a morose churlish fellow; the other like the willow, bending to the opinions of others as they were offered. An interesting conversation now takes place, in the course of which Christian describes the motives for his departure, and urges them to join him, referring to the word of God for a description of the blessings he eventually hoped to enjoy. The advice and entreaties of Christian, Obstinate rejects with scorn; and, regarding the Pilgrim's case as now desperate, wishes Pliable to return with him.

It is a sure sign of the badness of a cause, when railing is substituted for argument. Christian is determined to proceed, and Pliable appears inclined to accompany him; the temper of Obstinate manifests itself by terms of reproach, applied to both; he at length leaves them, and returns home.

There are but few of us who, at the commencement of our pilgrimage, have not been followed by Obstinate. Sometimes he has appeared in the character of a father, threatening us with his anger, if the new principles were not relinquished, and the new sect abandoned; or, a friend has called us aside, and, with concern on

his countenance, has asked, "Can the report be true, that you are about changing your religion?" Or a master has said to his servant, "Mark my words; I will have no methodists nor dissenters in my family; you must give up your attendance upon their worship, or your situation in my family." Instances, indeed, have been known, wherein it has been said, "Church, indeed! I hired you to do my work, not to go to church. Do your duty; mind what your mistress says; I want no church-going psalm-singers about me." To all such the writer would humbly say, "Let these people alone; they have discovered the value of their souls, and are under deep concern for their salvation. As children, the more they fear God, the more they will love you. As servants, they will become increasingly conscientious; for they will now remember that they have a master in heaven. Religion has saved thousands from temporal and eternal misery, while in no one instance has it proved injurious."

Christian and Pliable, now left to themselves, continue their journey for a time. The curiosity of the latter is gratified with the glowing description, which is given him by Christian, of that glory which awaits them in heaven:—golden crowns, golden harps, and shining raiment. Heaven and everlasting happiness are exceedingly inviting terms; but, however joyful the contemplation of them may be, we should remember they must be *obtained* before they can be *enjoyed*. Perhaps, if offered, *none* would refuse them,

although comparatively few think them worth the trials and difficulties of a pilgrimage; while others, allured by the description given of heaven, travel until they meet with some discouragement, quarrel with the difficulties of which they have been forewarned, and return to the place from whence they set out, leaving heaven to those whose faith and patience may instrumentally bring them to the enjoyment of it. Such was Pliable's case. For some time he listened with undivided attention to Christian's description of heaven; his anxiety to get there induced him to cry out, "Come on, let us mend our pace," when, in a moment, himself and his fellow-traveller found themselves plunged headlong into a miry slough! Here, for a considerable time, they both lay; Pliable declaring that, if he could but once get out, Christian should possess the brave country himself, for any share that he would seek after. A desperate struggle or two brought him out, when he kept his word; for he went back, never to return again. Christian also succeeded in getting out; but it was the opposite side to that by which he came in. Pliable extricated *himself*, Christian was obliged to have assistance. A man came to him, whose name was *Help;* and who, offering him his hand, drew him out.

The character of Pliable is summed up in a few words;—a weak and easy man, lightly taking up religion, and as lightly laying it down. If you meet him in the religious world, you

may as well expect to find stability in the wind, as fixedness of principle in him. Truth and error, right and wrong, are with him of comparatively small importance. He charitably hopes *all* will be saved, however much they may differ from each other in sentiment and practice. Meet with him *out* of the religious world, and he will go with you to hear preaching,—will approve of all he hears,—thinks all religions right,—and all Christians good people; only wonders that they cannot let each other go to heaven in their own way. Like a woolsack, he yields to every pressure without retaining any.

The *Slough of Despond* is a figurative description of that state of mind, which arises out of a superficial knowledge of the way of salvation. It is the natural consequence of deep and humbling convictions of the evil and guilt of sin, represented by the *mire* of the Slough. It is described as being at the beginning of the road that leads to heaven, for the purpose of showing how liable young pilgrims are to fall into it.

The *Steps* across it are the exceeding great and precious promises of the Gospel, which as the traveller discovers, and rests upon, he is preserved from *that* which the Psalmist complains of,—"I sink in deep mire where there is no standing."

The reason why these steps are not at all times seen is, that the eyes of the understanding are but partially opened: the view of the ful-

ness and freeness of divine grace is clouded and obscure. The extent of Christ's satisfaction, the sufficiency of his sacrifice, and the efficacy of his blood, have neither been felt nor enjoyed. Is it then to be wondered at, that the believer sinks into the state of distress so emphatically described under the idea of the Slough of Despond?

There is, however, another cause, which does not always receive the attention its importance demands;—I allude to nervous debility. I remember a minister once congratulating himself upon being born before nervous diseases became fashionable. *That* was his mercy. Did, however, those who think lightly of them, know with what tenacity they cleave to the sufferer's mind; with what fidelity they unite with every part of Christian experience; and how deep the colouring they give to that experience;—they would think them entitled to their pity, their prayers, and their advice. It is under this state of mind that the most gloomy conceptions are entertained of God, and that the difficulties of the way are magnified.

Let this description of the Slough of Despond operate as a caution against a mode of expression, which frequently occurs in extemporary prayer: "Lord, show us the *worst* of ourselves!" Who could bear the sight? Saul and Judas saw themselves;—the one fell upon his sword, and the other hanged himself! The guilt of their conduct overwhelmed their souls; they saw,

they felt nothing else,—and they miserably perished! Rather let us pray, "Lord, show us as much of ourselves as we are able to bear; and, even with this sight, may we have a corresponding view of the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world!"

The state of mind which we are now describing, is *that* upon which the world so frequently fastens, when it would warn the young and inexperienced against being *too religious*. "Now you perceive what religion has done for him; —how gloomy he looks! how often and deeply he sighs! I wonder why he sits poring over the Bible so often, and why so often is he heard saying his prayers?" Permit me to answer:— He has discovered that God is as holy and just, as he is merciful and good. He now knows the value of his soul, and feels convinced, that could he gain the world at the expence of his soul, he would be an eternal loser. Be pleased to exercise a little patience, and you will perceive his countenance brighten, and his sorrow turned into joy. Follow him through life, and his conduct will prove the excellency of the principles he is already under the influence of. Attend him upon his death-bed, and you will be compelled to say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

Pliable reached home in safety, and for a time endured the scorn of his neighbours. That ceasing, he took the scoffer's chair, and joined

them in the derision with which they treated Christian's pilgrimage.

To those who have had occasion to travel, it may scarcely be necessary to say how desirable it is to meet with company on the road. Should the company we thus meet with, be acquainted with the road, while we are ignorant of it, we felicitate ourselves on being thus fortunate. For this, however, we may soon have reason to repent;—travellers have often been mistaken in their company, and betrayed by their guides.

Christian was still heavily burdened; groans and sighs at intervals relieved his mind. While in this state, he was joined by a man who offered him both consolation and advice. His name was *Worldly Wiseman;* and, like many more of the same name, he imagined that he had discovered the art of reconciling the simplicity of the Gospel with the wisdom of the world. Discovering the burdened and distressed state of Christian, and learning the means by which he became so, he offered him the following advice: "In a village, not quite a mile from this place, there resides a gentleman whose name is *Legality;* upon application to him, he will relieve you of your burden, and remove the pain which I see it occasions you. His practice in this way is considerable, and his success has been great. The name of the village is *Morality;* and as the houses there are very cheap, and many of them now unoccupied, it will be advisable for you

to send for your family, and to settle there. Provisions also are cheap and good; the neighbourhood is respectable, and you may live in credit and comfort."

Christian was a burdened, distressed man. Is it therefore to be wondered at, that he listened with attention, and yielded to the advice of Worldly Wiseman? He enquired the road which led to this desirable place; and, being directed, parted with his adviser.

The village of Morality is the residence of men who have never felt the plague of their hearts, nor their danger as sinners before God. Like the Pharisee of old, their language is, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are." They have but three articles in their creed: "Do the best you can for yourself in the world; keep close to the religion you were brought up in; and go to God for those deficiencies which may at last be discovered in your account."

A resident of this village, and a preacher, was once sent for by a dying man, who had been a great sinner. As he sat down, he asked him, "What sort of a life have you led?" The poor man replied, "A very bad one." "That's unfortunate," observed the inquirer; "but still you must have done *something* good in the course of your life." "Nothing that I recollect," was the reply. "Then your case is indeed bad. Had your past life been moral, or even decent; or, allowing it to have been bad, had you done

some good actions in the course of it, I could have given you some hope;—as it is, I can give you none." Having said this, he left him.

It has been objected against evangelical professors of the Gospel, that sufficient stress is not laid upon *Morality* in evangelical preaching. This is a mistake: they contend, that without personal holiness no man can see the Lord; that they are under the most sacred obligations to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in the world; that they are to do good unto all men, —even unto their enemies. Can the strictest professions of morality go beyond this? There lies the difference:—The moralist makes a foundation of his works, and builds his hopes of eternal happiness upon them: the genuine believer builds alone upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and regards his own works (however good) merely as evidences of that faith which accompanies salvation.

To this village of Morality was Christian travelling, in search of a man whose name was *Legality*. When passing by a hill, he became alarmed, lest a part of it, which overhung the road, should fall on him and crush him. It was exceedingly high, and contained volcanic matter; for while Christian stood trembling under his burden, the fire burst out, and he began to fear that his pilgrimage must here end. His burden appeared to increase, as his strength began to fail; and he bitterly regretted that he ever turned out of the way.

The hill was the broken law of God, the curse of which is finely described by the part which overhung the road, and which threatened destruction to all who were under it. Legality, who lived so near it, and who preached salvation by it, taught, "That a man is not justified by faith in the Lord Jesus, but by the deeds of the law." He was one who undertook to relieve distressed souls by inculcating the principles of heathen morality.

Too many preachers of this description are yet to be found; men who tell their hearers, that except they keep the law they cannot be saved; who take the glory of a sinner's salvation from Christ, and give it to Moses; men who bid their hearers draw their consolation from their obedience, rather than from that righteousness, which is upon all and unto all that believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

How long Christian might have remained in the state we have already described, would be exceedingly difficult to say, had not his friend Evangelist now made his appearance. Welcome as this appearance must have been to Christian, he was ashamed to meet him; he had turned aside from the path he ought to have kept—*that* path which alone could lead to the Gate, concerning which he was told, he must enter, ere he could be saved. He had sought for ease, by means upon which he could neither ask nor expect the blessing of God. He had also exposed himself to destruction, by losing sight of

the object he was told to keep in view until he had reached the *Wicket Gate.* No wonder, then, that Christian blushed, nor that Evangelist frowned as he drew nigh, and made those inquiries which were calculated to show him the folly and sin of his conduct, and to teach him, for the future, that only by the most implicit obedience to the commands of God could he hope to reach his journey's end.

The character which Evangelist gives Worldly Wiseman, Legality, and his son *Civility* (a being so insignificant, that we had nearly overlooked him), is intended to show Christian the danger he had been exposed to. He describes Worldly Wiseman as an alien, Legality as a cheat, and Civility as a hypocrite. How dreadful, that these men should assume the office of teachers! Well might our Lord say, "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

It must have been a memorable day to the people of Israel, on which Elijah called to heaven and was answered by fire. So memorable was the appeal of Evangelist for the confirmation of the truths he had delivered to Christian. The conversation about closing, fire proceeds from the mountain at the call of Evangelist, accompanied by the following words: "As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things

which are written in the book of the law to do them."

The distress of Christian was now greater than it had hitherto been; he condemned himself for listening to bad counsel, and began to fear that he should soon be destroyed; he however did not despair; for, addressing Evangelist, he asked, Were there no hopes? Might he return by the way that he came? Might he still go to the Wicket Gate?—and would this his sin be forgiven?

To all these questions Evangelist gave encouraging answers; and, having smiled upon him, advised and blessed him. Christian recommenced his journey; and stopped not, nor spoke, until he reached the spot from whence he had turned aside. A little more exertion brought him to the *Gate*, over which he found written, "*Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.*"

We have now reached an important part of the Pilgrim's Progress. Hitherto we have considered Christian as a man under great convictions of the evil of sin, as having an earnest desire to be saved from it, and as using the means which God has mercifully appointed. We must, in a little time, consider him as a *converted* man; and his experience *that* of a genuine believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. His trials, which were many and severe, are still in the earthly portion of believers, with the exception of those which were peculiar to the times in which Bunyan lived.

In reviewing what has been delivered, we may perceive the manner in which a work of divine grace usually manifests itself;—not by a few light and airy notions of religion, which, however they may, for a time, float upon the surface of the mind, neither reach nor affect the heart; nor by learning the creed, or shibboleth, of a party, or denomination, and then uniting with it; nor by the external observance of ordinances, while the mind is never led to mark, learn, and inwardly digest their spiritual meaning and importance; by none, nor by all of these, are the marks of divine grace discovered; but by a deep and abiding sense of the evil of sin, —by a conviction of the danger to which it exposes, and by an earnest desire to be delivered from the one, and escape from the other, through the instrumentality of those means, and by the agency of that grace, which God has appointed.

We may also perceive how dangerous it is to rest short of that change of heart, to which our Lord refers, when he says: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." *Morality*, although a village, is a most extensive one. It is the residence of him who blesses God that he has got forward in the world; that he has maintained a good character amongst his neighbours through life; and that he is neither afraid to die, nor to to meet God after death. Here dwells also the man, whose goodness of heart induces him to regard with indifference,

if not to reject with disdain, that solemn declaration: "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Here too resides the man, who, Proteus like, can change his shape, and suit his colour, to meet the wishes of all who know him; whose devotion at church, or chapel, is only equalled by his enjoyments at the tavern, or ale-house; and who, notwithstanding the most marked inconsistencies of conduct, still retains his character of a *good moral sort of a man.*

Let believers in Christ Jesus be thankful that they have passed this place: let them pity and pray for those that remain in it: let them use their efforts to send the sound of the Gospel trumpet through it, until its inhabitants, taking the alarm, shall leave it, exclaiming as they go:

Talk they of morals? O thou bleeding Love!
Thou maker of new morals to mankind!
The grand morality is love of Thee.

LECTURE III.

Description of the Wicket Gate—Christian's Reception at it—His Reception at the Interpreter's House—The important Lessons he there learned.

THAT some important change must pass upon man ere he can be meet for the kingdom of heaven, is a fact which it would be as needless

to prove, as it would be useless to deny. Some suppose that this change is produced by baptism; others, that an outward reformation is all that is needful; while many imagine, that death and the grave will effect the change that is requisite for admission into the kingdom of God.

As the lectures are not controversial, we will pass the opinions by, observing that, by baptism (considered as an initiatory rite) we are admitted into the visible, professing church of Christ, in order that we may be instructed in those things which make for our peace; trusting that the Lord will, in his own time, bless the means of grace, by making them the instruments of our conversion.

We have already observed, that the Wicket Gate is the Lord Jesus Christ, and we have referred to his own words for the truth of the observation. As, however, it is possible for a man to come *to* a gate through which he never passes, so we find that some have come to Christ, who have not been saved by him: a memorable instance of which is recorded in Mark x. 17. A young man having ran to him, kneeled, and inquired what good thing he must do, to inherit eternal life. Our Lord replied, by telling him the requirements of the law. He asserted, that he had answered those requirements, but failed in the proof; for when he was commanded to sell all that he had, and give the produce to the poor, and to take up his cross

and follow Christ, he *went away*,—went away *grieved*, because he had much property! From this instance, we learn that it is possible to come to Christ for the purpose of inquiring the way of salvation; to reject that way; to go back to the City of Destruction, or the Village of Morality, never to return.

Christian, however, having knocked several times, was at length asked, by a person within, his name, his residence, and his business. To these inquiries he answered he was a burdened sinner, from the City of Destruction; that he was going to Mount Zion for deliverance; and, having been informed that the road lay through the gate, he was anxious to know whether he might be admitted. The gate was immediately opened, and the porter, taking him by the arm, pulled him in. Christian, surprised at the action, inquired into its cause, and received for answer: "A little distance from this gate, there is erected a strong castle, of which *Beelzebub* is the captain; from thence both he and they that are with him shoot arrows at them that come up to this gate, if haply they may die before they enter." "Then," said Christian, "I rejoice and tremble."

The porter's name was *Good Will;* like Evangelist, a minister of the Gospel, and one to whom Christian could open his mind. Was not Good Will the minister under whom Christian sat until he was brought to a saving acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ, whose

church he eventually joined, and through whose instrumentality were revealed to his soul the mysteries of the kingdom of God? I humbly offer these suggestions with the sincerest deference to the opinions of those whose understandings and research demand it of me. The character of Evangelist forms no solid objection against this conclusion, it being no unusual thing for a person to be awakened or directed by one minister, and eventually to settle under another; this must have been a case to a much greater extent during the unsettled times of the Commonwealth and of the Restoration, than now.

Returning to the Wicket Gate, and reading the inscription over it, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you," we at once discover that the act of knocking was *frequent and fervent prayer.*

Christian was a convinced and burdened sinner; he had fled from his home, and from his family; he had reached the place to which he had been directed through many difficulties; what then remained for him to do, in order that he might be admitted? Nothing but to kneel before God, to give himself as a lost sinner into his hand, to supplicate forgiveness through the blood of Christ, and to pray that, living and dying, he might be found a partaker of his salvation. Now, mark, this was not done once, nor twice, but often. Listen to his language: "O Lord, I am a burdened, guilty sinner. I have fled to that door, through which alone I can be saved. I have

been directed to Jesus Christ, as the way, the truth, and the life; and lo, I *am* before him! Holy Saviour, have mercy upon me! Lord, hear my prayer! Lord open to me, or I perish!"—I speak with the deepest reverence; I know that an omniscient God has access to every movement of my mind; but, without hesitation, before him I say, *These feelings, and this language, were never expressed in vain.* The door *was* opened; Christian *did* enter; and in the fulness of his heart, he exclaimed, "But O what favour is this to me, that yet I am admitted entrance here!"

The importance of this *entering in* is strongly marked by the Castle, and its captain, already described, as stationed near the Gate, in order to wound, if not destroy, all who came to Christ for salvation; while, by the anxiety of Good Will for the Pilgrim's safety, was expressed the earnest desires of faithful ministers, for the salvation of all who feel their need of it.

In the conversation which now takes place between Christian and Good Will, we have a few particulars of Christian's journey, with which we are already acquainted. It will be borne in mind, that he was informed by Evangelist, that "when he reached the Wicket Gate, he would there be told what he yet had to do." Good Will therefore shows him a certain narrow path; telling him, at the same time, it was the way he must go; that it was a way cast up by the patriarchs, prophets, Christ, and his apostles, and so straight as scarcely to be missed.

Still, as it was possible to get out of it, Christian was to remember this essential difference between the true, and all the false ways he might meet with ;—the former was *narrow*, and *straight ;* the latter were *wide* and *crooked.*

After one important inquiry, the Pilgrim prepares for his departure. The inquiry was,—Could Good Will help him off with his burden ? To which he was answered, that, at the place of deliverance, it would itself fall from his back ; until then, he must bear it. They now parted ; Good Will telling him, that he must travel until he came to the house of the *Interpreter,* where he would be shown some excellent things.

The path in which Christian is now found was first cast up by the patriarchs and prophets, and afterwards trod by Christ and his apostles, in which we must be found, before we can enter the kingdom of God: is the path of unqualified submission to the will of God,—of implicit obedience to his commands—of sincerity of intention—of holiness of life—and of zeal for his glory.

Upon Christian's arrival at the house of the Interpreter, according to the advice he had received, he knocked ; and, the door being opened, he inquired for the master of the house ; to whom, having stated his business, he was requested to walk in, and informed that he should see many things which would prove useful to him during his pilgrimage.

That the Interpreter was the Spirit of God,

will scarcely admit of a question, seeing that it is his peculiar office to explain and apply the truths of the Gospel. The mysteries he saw in this place were amongst the most essential of these truths, and which we shall describe in the order they were shown him.

A picture was the first object to which his attention was called. It was the portrait of a man, whose eyes were lifted up to heaven; the *Bible* was in his hand; the law of truth was written upon his lips; the world was behind his back; he stood as if he pleaded with men; and a crown of gold hung over his head.

The picture was a description of what every minister of the gospel should be. His eyes should be directed to heaven for instruction and assistance; the word of God should be at once his commission and encouragement, to preach to saints and sinners; his business should be between God and man; and truth the only medium through which this business should be transacted. From such a man the world has receded, and left him an unobstructed view of eternity; his reward is reserved in heaven for him; and the day of his death will be the day of his coronation.

The recollection of this picture Christian was commanded to cherish; the man whom it represented being appointed for his guide. It was probable also that he would meet with *some*, who, while they professed to lead him right, might conduct him into the paths of death.

Nor shall *we* contemplate this picture in vain,

if, as sustaining the ministerial character, we are led to see the importance of daily intercourse *with* God, and daily dependance *upon* God; if the Bible is the man of our counsel, and the storehouse of those truths we deliver; if the world be *at* our backs, instead of being *in* our hearts; and if we look for our reward from God and not from man. Neither shall we as *hearers*, if we are led to value our ministers by the holiness and usefulness of their lives, rather than by the splendour of their talents; if the remembrance be cherished, that they are sent forth by God as heralds of salvation; if we are led with increasing fervour to pray for their success, and are found walking with them in that path which leads to God's right hand.

A very large *parlour*, the floor and furniture of which were covered with dust, was the place into which Christian was next introduced. A man was called, who, beginning to sweep, caused the dust so much to fly about, as to make breathing difficult. A female servant, standing by, was then directed to sprinkle the room with water, after which it was swept, and cleansed with pleasure.

The parlour was the heart of man, unsanctified by the word and Spirit of God. The dust represented the depravity of his heart, and the corruptions of his nature, covering the whole of him. The man sweeping, was intended to show the application of God's law, by which this depravity was stirred up, almost to the destruc-

tion of him who witnessed it,—practically illustrating the declaration of the apostle: "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." And, from all that passed, the Interpreter argued, that the law not only discovered sin, but gave it strength, to that degree that the power of the Gospel only could subdue it. The *damsel* who afterward sprinkled the room, and then swept it, beautifully describes the power of the *gospel*, as displayed in subduing sin, and eventually cleansing the heart.

It is a fact, that men of the most amiable tempers, and of the most correct deportment; men who have been referred to, as standards of human excellence, and in whose conduct scarcely a fault has been discovered;—that these men, so prized and so praised, have been heard to express themselves in the most humiliating language. They have been heard to say, that in them dwelt no good thing; that from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, there was no soundness; that no action of their lives was free from sin; and that their hearts, the once fancied seats of every virtue, were now rather cages for unclean birds, or dens of wild beasts. Now, what could have produced this mighty revulsion?—this drawing of the secret workings of the heart into daily and nightly observations? Can it for a moment be supposed, that such men as have been described, would insult God, or man, with the mockery of language, which they knew to be

insincere? Would they dare to mourn over evils which never existed?—or make complaints for which there was no ground?—or supplicate forgiveness for sins which they never committed? or, in a word, would they assume a character which they once despised, or ask for blessings, to the nature of which they were utter strangers? To all these questions, we have but one answer: "Whereas once they were blind, now they see."

Christian was now shown into a room, where two little children sat, each in his chair. The name of the eldest was *Passion;* of the youngest, *Patience.* Passion seemed exceeding dissatisfied; Patience, on the contrary, appeared cheerful and contented. A person shortly entered the room, bringing with him a bag full of treasure, which he poured at the feet of Passion, who, taking it up, laughed Patience to scorn. In a short time, however, the treasure was exchanged for rags, for misery, and want!

The two grand divisions of the human race are here intended; the men of this world, who have their portion in it, and the humble expectants of a blessedness hereafter. It would almost be a waste of words, to reason upon the folly of the one, or upon the wisdom of the other. It is however deeply to be regretted, that so large a portion of mankind should so lightly esteem the promised blessings of a future state, as scarcely to think them worth one serious inquiry. How absurd! If about commencing a

journey, would they not deem preparation of importance for it? If warned to quit their present dwellings, would they not inquire for others? From whence then is that strange infatuation, under the influence of which, men drive, as intruders, from the minds, the thoughts of death, of judgment, and of eternity? How distressing the reflection, that, in the moment when least expecting it, and when the least prepared for it, their destruction will come as a whirlwind, and remove them to that place of wretchedness, from whence there will be no return.

The subjects of that *Patience* which has thus been allegorically exhibited have every thing to hope and expect, without any thing to fear. In patience they possess their souls; with patience they take the slanders of the wicked, endure the evils of life, and wait until the promised change comes; knowing that the things which are seen are temporal, while the things which are not seen are eternal.

The Interpreter now led Christian to a *wall*, against which a fire was burning. By the side of this fire, there stood one who, although constantly casting water upon it, could neither damp nor extinguish it! After some time considering, without being able to account for what he saw, Christian was conducted to the back of the wall, and he there saw a man with a vessel of oil; and with which, through a hole in the wall, he kept supplying the fire; thus causing it to burn

stronger and higher, notwithstanding the efforts made to extinguish it.

This is the interpretation: The fire is a work of divine grace in the heart of man, wrought there by the Spirit of God. He that threw water upon it, for the purpose of extinguishing it, was the Devil. The person who, behind the wall, kept feeding the flame, was Christ; but whom the subject of that grace could not see; in order to show how difficult it is for the tried and tempted believer to understand the means by which this work is carried on.

So silent and mysterious are the operations of divine grace, that it is impossible, at times, to observe them. It is as with seed cast into the ground, the growth of which cannot be discovered; but which, in due time, brings forth its fruit. It is carried on amidst all the infirmities of our nature, amidst all the assaults of the Devil, and amidst those doubts and fears which are so distressing to those who are the subjects of them; —carried on to that state of perfection, which will for ever unite it with glory, and which, as a top-stone, will crown it, amidst the acclamations of angels, and the plaudits of just men made perfect, ascribing *Grace,—grace unto it.*

The dangers attendant upon a public profession of the gospel, were now shown to the Pilgrim, under the representation of a beautiful *palace*, on the top of which were seen a number of persons splendidly dressed, and walking

together as in a state of happiness. The door which admitted into this palace was surrounded by a number of armed men, who appeared ready to dispute the passage of him who was determined to enter. At a distance from the door sat a man with a table before him, on which was a book with pens and ink, for the purpose of writing down the names of any who might present themselves for the purpose of being admitted. Christian was both surprised and alarmed at what he saw; but ere his mind could draw any conclusions, and while many that were present started back with apprehensions of danger, he saw a resolute man come up to the Writer, and say, "Set down my name, sir." This was no sooner done, than the man drew his sword, put on his helmet, and rushed upon the armed men who guarded the door. The conflict was fierce; and, in the course of it, he gave and received several wounds. His foes at length began to give way; when, following up the advantage he had thus gained, he reached the door, into which, as he entered, a voice was heard from the company within, saying,

> "Come in, come in,
> Eternal glory thou shalt win."

Christian, shortly after this, saw him clothed with the dress, and admitted into the society, of those who were still at the top of the palace; when, turning to the Interpreter, he smiled, and said, "I think I know the meaning of this."

The palace represented the church of God, surrounded by its enemies armed with the civil power, determined to assault, and, if possible, to destroy those who endeavoured to unite with it. The *Writer*, at a little distance from the door, probably referred to those holy men, who, as preachers, and church officers, were still to be found, regardless of personal danger, in the very midst of enemies, endeavouring to pluck sinners as brands from the burnings. The man determined to enter, described the nature of a Gospel profession in those days, and the danger to which its professors were exposed. The weapons which they employed were not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty, through God, to the pulling down the strong holds of error and superstition; —they were arguments drawn from the word of God,—holy and unblamable lives,—and unconquerable zeal for the glory of God. The company seen at the top of the palace, walking, and clothed in gold, was descriptive of the security which believers have often enjoyed, even in times of the greatest persecution,—a security produced solely by the presence of God. The invitation, "Come in," was at once calculated to afford encouragement to those who valued not their lives in the cause of God,—and to show the joy which every accession produced, among the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christian, strengthened and cautioned by what he had now seen, expressed a wish to resume his journey. He had, however, two lessons

yet to learn;—lessons not soon to be forgotten, and which we have reason to pray may not be lost upon *us*.

The Interpreter, taking Christian by the hand, led him into a very dark room, in which he saw a man seated in an *iron cage*. His hands were folded together; his eyes were fixed on the ground; and his sighs and groans expressed the agonies of his soul, and the hopelessness of his condition. He was *a man in despair*. The Interpreter did not speak to him; but from the conversation which passed between him and Christian, we are made acquainted with the following particulars of his life: "I was once," said he, "a fair and flourishing professor of the Gospel. I thought myself in a fair way for the celestial city, and often anticipated its enjoyment. By degrees, almost imperceptible to myself, but not to others, I became first indifferent, and then careless. I gradually left off that watchfulness and sobriety, by which my former conduct had been marked. Temptations to sin presented themselves, to which I yielded from time to time, until, as my conscience hardened, I delighted in the sins, at the bare mention of which I formerly shuddered. I fought hard against my convictions, and suffered more on my passage to this place, than you will on your way to heaven. Often did the Interpreter, who stands by you, warn me; often did he tell me that to this place I must come; and as often did I endeavour to drown his voice. I remember

well how gently, at times, he asked me why I would destroy myself?—why I would persist in grieving the Spirit of God?—and why not accept the mercy still offered to me, although the chief of sinners? But all was in vain: I laid the reins upon the neck of my lusts; I sinned against the light of the word, and against the goodness of God. I have grieved the *Spirit*, and he is gone; I have tempted the Devil, and he is come; I have provoked God to anger, and he has left me; I have so hardened my heart, that I cannot repent; nay, more than this, I have crucified the Son of God afresh; I have despised his righteousness; I have counted his blood an unholy thing; I have done despite to the Spirit of his grace; I have shut myself out of the promises; and there now remains to me nothing but threatenings,—dreadful, faithful threatenings,—which will devour me as an adversary! This I have done, for the lusts, the pleasures, and the profits of this world; things in which I promised myself delight, which always disappointed me, but the recollection of which, at this moment, is in my soul like burning worms, gnawing and devouring me! God has denied me repentance; his word gives me no encouragement to believe. *He* has shut me up in this iron cage; nor can all the men in the world let me out. O Eternity! Eternity! how shall I grapple with the misery that I must meet with in Eternity?"

The state of mind which has been thus

described is intended to show the cause, the nature, and the consequences of absolute despair. Its cause may be traced to indifference and carelessness; its nature is marked by the iron cage and the unavailing complaint, "I cannot get out;" and its consequences are, the final rejection of God, an indescribable horror of soul, and a fearful apprehension of punishment yet to be endured. In this state of soul, the means of grace are unavailable; the power to turn to God is taken away; and the heart increasing in hardness, and the mind gathering strength,—not from hope, but from despair,—cuts off the most distant expectation of mercy. All the marks of that sin, for which there is no forgiveness, are to be found in the conduct of this wretched sufferer. He had sinned against the essential truths of the Gospel, and against the fullest conviction of their importance. He had trod under foot the Son of God; he had accounted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing. Grieved at these horrid blasphemies, and at this second crucifixion of Christ, the Holy Spirit had left him, never to return; the powers of darkness had possessed themselves of every faculty of the soul; and, I ask, what could the Scribes and Pharisees, who blasphemed the Spirit of God, and afterward crucified his Son, do more than this? I am perfectly aware, that some good men have supposed the impossibility of this sin being committed at any time subsequent to the resurrection of Christ. I beg leave to

differ from them, admitting, that the actual violence offered to his sacred person can no more be repeated. But it should be remembered, that the awful denunciation did not follow personal outrage, but the ascribing to Satan the power and the glory alone possessed by, and due to, God; and that the hatred, the malice, and the blasphemy, were levelled against God, and God alone. The event referred to is recorded in the 12th chapter of Matthew, from the 22d to the 37th verse; an attentive perusal of which will leave this impression upon the generality of enlightened minds,—That the blasphemers of the Holy Ghost were among the crucifiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom Stephen afterward cut to the heart, and by whom he was at length put to death.

A young man, once well known to the writer of these pages, when about seventeen years of age, professed to have been brought to a saving acquaintance with the nature of divine truth. He was an apprentice; and with diligence in business, he appeared to unite fervour of spirit, serving the Lord. His knowledge of the Scripture was great, and his attendance upon the means of grace most exemplary. If I mistake not, he was a member of a Christian church in Hertfordshire. Before the term of his apprenticeship expired, he enlisted for a soldier, and was not heard of for some time afterward. He at length returned home; and an alteration, of the most fearful description, was observed to have taken place in

his conduct. He had become a drunkard and a swearer! On one occasion, while in a state of intoxication, he drew his bayonet at the door of a meeting-house, and threatened destruction to any that opposed his entrance. The state of the congregation need not be described: he however conducted himself, during the service, with as much propriety as could be expected from a person in his degraded and unhappy state. His former friends, and especially his master, felt anxious to know the means by which he had fallen from his profession, and had become the slave of those habits which threatened his temporal and eternal destruction. He at length described his iniquitous course, together with the peculiar cause of that desperation, which now marked his conduct.—Soon after his enlistment, he felt much concerned at finding himself in a society of men, who seemed to make a merit of cursing, and whose wickedness was limited only by the means of perpetrating it. To these things, however, he by degrees became reconciled, then joined in them, and eventually became as wicked, and as desperate, as the men were, at whose conduct he formerly appeared terrified! The wickedness of man has bounds to its operation, although it has none to its extent. Such was *his*, of whom we are now speaking. More than once did he acknowledge, that there was scarcely a crime that the human mind could conceive of, that he had not attempted or perpetrated. His former profession

he spoke of with contempt, and Christianity was made the butt of his ridicule: he became a bold and daring blasphemer. After continuing this course for a considerable time, he felt less remorse of conscience than he did at first: still he was not without its visitations; and painful was the contrast between his present and former situation. His wickedness had now already reached that stage, at which the Holy Spirit of God left him. He was one day conversing with some of his companions in iniquity. The person of the Redeemer was the subject of conversation. After allusion to the mysterious incarnation of the Son of God, he felt an unusual commotion of his mind;—it was like the warning of an internal monitor, not to go forward. He paused, and a momentary horror shook his soul; but the master whom he served was at hand. He recovered himself, and uttered blasphemies, which the writer dare not mention! A deadly pang seized his soul, as he uttered the last word: it was but momentary; yet in that moment he felt that God had left him for ever! He felt that he had lied against the Holy Ghost; his past experience recurred to his mind; and his guilt, like a stroke of lightning, scorched his soul. Yes, this he felt; and yet, with the settled calmness of a fiend-like despair, he deliberately repeated his blasphemies. His own words afterward were, "I found *then*, that God had done with me for ever; and I felt as assured of hell, as if I had been then sinking into it!"

This, then, was the cause of that desperation, which has been already referred to: and under the influence of which, he was led into the commission of a series of crime. When I last saw him, he had lost the half of one of his hands, having been shot while endeavouring to break into a gentleman's premises. The remainder of his hand was in a state of mortification, and apprehensions were entertained for his life. I proposed prayer to him; he shook his head, and said, "It is of no use." I spoke of the efficacy of the blood of Christ, the sufficiency of the atonement he had made, and the characters of many that had been saved. While thus speaking, I endeavoured, from his countenance, to read what was passing within; and if the index was correct, the account of himself was true;—that he was beyond every expectation of mercy;—that he was as sure of eternal perdition as if he was now in it;—that his hopes and desires of salvation were taken away; and that he had no wish for the salvation God had determined to withhold!—The mortification, I have since been informed, was stopped, and he may yet be alive. Should these pages ever meet his eye, he will probably say, "I am the man!"

I feel that I ought to apologize for the introduction of a narrative so distressing as this must have proved; but it has been introduced with no unfriendly intent; nor will the lesson it teaches be lost upon us, if by it we are warned of the consequences of the departure from God;

—if the young, especially, are from it led to shun the company of the wicked;—if it has a tendency to make us feel increasingly our dependance upon God, and should cause us, with increasing earnestness, to cry, "Hold thou us up, and we shall be safe."

A description of the *Day of Judgment*, given under the similitude of a dream, was the last circumstance which Christian attended to in the Interpreter's house. He saw a man who had just been awakened out of his sleep, after a most fearful dream: in that dream he saw the heavens become exceedingly black, which, accompanied with thunder and lightning, alarmed him; the clouds also were unusually agitated. In the midst of this alarm, he heard the sound of a trumpet, and saw a man sitting upon the agitated clouds, attended by the thousands of heaven, the whole of whom appeared as in the glow of a furnace. He then heard a voice, saying, "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment!" The rocks were immediately rent, the graves of themselves opened, and the dead that were therein came forth; while some, as they looked upwards, rejoiced, many of them fled, and sought to hide themselves beneath the rocks and the mountains that were thus torn from their foundations. Flight, however, was vain; they were brought from their hiding-places, and compelled to stand before Him, who sat upon his cloud-formed throne. The book which was before him was now opened, while he commanded

the assembled world to draw nigh. A fierce flame separated between the Judge and the world; from the book was read the lives and destinies of every one that stood before the throne; which, being done, he said to those around him, "Gather the wheat into my garner, but burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Just by where the dreamer stood, the earth opened; hideous noises, smoke, and coals of fire burst forth; the angels appeared to take no notice of him; the eye of the Judge was intently fixed upon him; conscience afflicted him, and every hope of escape appeared to be cut off, when at this moment he awoke and found that it was a dream!

That which he dreamt, we must realize. To us it is appointed once to die, and after death to stand in judgment. From the lips of Christ we shall hear our doom, and sink to hell, or be publicly absolved, and admitted to heaven. As wheat we shall be gathered into the garner of God, or as chaff suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. May the advice given to Christian be received by us: "Keep these things in thy mind, and let them be as goads to thee, to urge thee forward in thy way."

Christian now prepares to leave the Interpreter's house, receiving his blessing in the following words, "The Comforter be always with thee, good Christian, to guide thee in the way that leads to the city."—I am aware of a seeming difficulty, arising out of this parting wish;—

the difficulty refers to my having concluded, that the Interpreter could only mean the Spirit of God. It should, however, be remembered, that the Holy Spirit sustains the two-fold character of *enlightener* and *comforter* of his people; and that, having thus instructed Christian in the things connected with his peace, he wishes him all the consolations flowing from perseverance and obedience. I leave the question of the Interpreter's identity as a matter of pure opinion, wishing my brethren in the ministry to weigh the difficulties connected with the supposition, that the Interpreter is a man like ourselves; and asking, How can man *spiritually interpret*, and savingly *apply*, the essential truths of the Gospel?—reminding them, at the same time, that it is *the* —not *an* Interpreter.

From the Lecture itself, we may learn the necessity of being born again. A profession, however long continued,—a creed, however sound, —and a devotedness to religion, however ardent, —are alike insufficient for salvation. "Ye must be born again."

We may also learn the willingness of Christ to save. "Knock, and it shall be opened," is still written over mercy's gate. We may also here see, without tasting, the bitter fruits of apostacy; how fearful the cry of despair: "I cannot, O, I cannot get out!"

LECTURE VI.

Christian released from his Burden by a View of the Cross—Description of the Shining Ones—Characters of Simple, Sloth, Presumption, Formality, and Hypocrisy—Christian's Arrival at Hill Difficulty.

When the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, visited the churches of Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, they confirmed the souls of the disciples, exhorted them to continue in the faith, and assured them that, through much tribulation, they must enter the kingdom of God. Neither change of time, nor of circumstances, has superseded the necessity of this exhortation, and of this assurance. The believer's path is still a path of difficulty and of danger; and faith and patience are still essential to his entering the kingdom of God. These are divinely promised, and Christian is before us, an evidence of their sufficiency. We have seen that, throughout his journey, he has groaned under the recollection of his past transgressions. Neither Evangelist nor Good Will were able to relieve him; and his only consolation was, that at the place of deliverance the burden would, of itself, fall off. This place he has now nearly reached.

By a reference to the close of the last Lecture, we shall perceive that Christian was about resuming his journey. He had seen sufficient, at the Interpreter's house, to convince him of the

necessity of speed; and, burdened as he was, he ran until he came to a *Cross*, at the bottom of which was a *Sepulchre*. To his surprise and joy, his burden here fell from his back and rolled into the sepulchre, never to be felt or seen again. In the fulness of his gratitude, he exclaimed, "He hath given me rest by his sorrow, and life by his death!" While in this state of mind, alternately gazing at the cross, and weeping with joy, he found himself in the company of three *Shining Ones*, by whom he was saluted with, "Peace be to thee." The first, addressing him, said, "Thy sins be forgiven;" the second stripped him of his rags, and clothed him with a change of raiment; the third set a mark upon his forehead, and gave him a *Roll*, with a seal upon it, telling him to look at it often, as he went forward, and at last to present it at the Celestial Gate. They then left him; but in the possession of a felicity he had never experienced before.

The two events thus recorded are interesting in their nature, and important in their consequences; as, by the first, we see the manner in which a sinner is released from the burden of his sins; and, by the second, we shall be led to make a few inquiries concerning the Shining Ones.

The cross and the sepulchre evidently refer to the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ; upon the former he died for our sins; and, from the latter, he arose for our justifi-

cation. When therefore John the Baptist beheld Christ, he directed the attention of his disciples to him, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" from which time to the present, the substance of the Christian ministry has been contained in one short declaration: "We preach Christ crucified."

Such also is the uniform experience of believers, however great their past transgressions have been, or however long those transgressions have been persisted in;—a sense of the dying compassion of the Saviour removes at once the guilt, the power, and the love of sin: and as between the magnet and the pole there is an attraction which cannot be accounted for, so between the soul of a believer and the Saviour of sinners, there is an attraction, and a power, which first unites, and then for ever binds them. The attraction is displayed by Christian's stopping at the cross, and the power by the loss of his burden; while he himself felt the full force of Zechariah's prophetic declaration: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace, and of supplication: and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born."

I submit it to the serious consideration of my hearers, whether by the Shining Ones is not in-

tended the ministry of angels; the apostle Paul expressly declaring, that "they are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." I am aware that this sentiment has been carried to the most extravagant lengths, and has led to a species of idolatry, as disgraceful to its professors as it must be offensive to God. Were the saints and angels worshipped by the Roman Catholic church, permitted to appear to their votaries, and address them ,it would be in the language which was addressed to John in Patmos—"*Worship God.*" Still, as the abuse of a doctrine is no argument against the truth of it; so the superstitious adoration of angels is no just argument against a belief in the ministry of angels; neither in the remotest degree will this belief supersede the work of the Holy Spirit; regarding the ministry of angels as in perfect subserviency to *His* mind and will, by whom they are sent forth. Valuable and important as ministers of the Gospel and their labours are, they universally and cheerfully acknowledge, that no saving power resides with them. They cannot change the sinner's heart; they cannot reclaim the wanderer; nor remove the doubts, or distresses of a believer; nor comfort with the assurance of the love, the faithfulness, and the power of God. They cannot arm the soul against its foes, nor fortify it against the fears of death;—none of these things can the zeal, the talents, or the affections of a minister accom-

plish. Strange! Of what use then are they? They are *instruments* in the hands of God, whereby *He* accomplishes all. The trees of the forest would laugh at the threats of the axe, but would tremble at the hand that could wield it. The treasure of the Gospel would for ever remain in the earthen vessels of the ministry, were the power which resides with God to lie dormant. It is therefore "not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." There is no part of this reasoning that will not apply to the ministry of angels. Under the agency of the eternal Spirit, they may reach every faculty of the soul; they may be able to touch all its secret springs, and direct its every movement, until it reaches and enters the kingdom of heaven. They may apprize the believer of the approach of his foes; nay, more than this, may meet, confront, and vanquish them; for "he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Should this reasoning be admitted as scriptual, then from it we may draw the following conclusions :—That we are surrounded by holy and happy beings, who take an interest in our welfare, and who often stand between us and danger; who visit our souls with messages of love and mercy, from the God and Father of our spirits; who rejoice in every expression of our love to God, and in every instance of our zeal for his glory; who mourn (as far as angels can mourn) over every deviation from the straight and narrow path of

obedience; and who, with the tenderest solicitude, await our return: "I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth." May I not also ask, Is there any thing in the word of God which forbids the supposition of a spiritual intercourse with those who have reached heaven before us? Does the mother, who trained her daughter up in the fear of the Lord—who taught her to kneel, and encouraged her to pray—who witnessed her dedication to God, and who, until the close of life, saw her walk humbly and consistently before him—who, at the last stage of human existence, kissed the tears from the eyes of her child, and bid her not to sorrow as those that have no hope:—does she, I ask, sometimes visit her earthly abode? If not, whence is it that the afflicted daughter, at times, almost realizes the presence of her late parent, and addresses her in some such language as this: Dear mother! thy holy and happy spirit is now for ever at rest; still I sometimes feel as if thou wert present. Thy prayers, thy tears, and thy holy example, are still before me. Oh, mother! if such is our Father's will, be near me while passing through this wilderness, and when, at the close of it, this veil of mortality shall drop into the grave, then lead me to the eternal throne, and say, "Here, Lord, am I, and the child thou gavest me."

I offer these remarks under the fullest conviction, that we are on the very borders of a

spiritual and invisible world; and that, did it please God to give us the faculty of discerning spiritual beings, we should find ourselves surrounded by them: because, between our own spirits, there are sympathies which attract, and from which we love each other, even before an acquaintance has commenced; because good and bad men, in the moments preceding their dissolution, and in the apparent exercise of their reason, have declared, that around their beds have stood supernatural beings, who, as messengers of mercy, were waiting to convey them to heaven, or, as instruments of vengeance, to seize and drag them to hell. I offer them finally, because of the many similar instances recorded in the Scriptures, and because we are nowhere informed that this mode of communication is at an end.

Returning to Christian, we find him in possession of a change of raiment, a mark upon his forehead, and a roll in his hand. By the first, I understand the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, for his justification; and which, like "the best robe," is given unto all and is found upon all that believe,—which is not cast *over* the rags of his own self-righteousness, but which is received by faith, when stripped of them. By the mark upon his forehead, I understand that *practical holiness*, which is the distinguishing characteristic of Christianity, and without which no man will see the Lord. By the roll, with the seal affixed to it, is intended the witness

of God's Holy Spirit, testifying to the reality of that change of which Christian was the subject, and assuring him of his interest in the blessings of salvation. And I again say, that I see no reason why the revelation of these truths may not form part of the ministry of angels, under the agency of Him to whom they ascribe the power and the glory.

Thus released, and thus assured, once more the pilgrim resumes his journey; and, in the course of a short time, reaches a place where he saw three men fast asleep. They had fetters upon their legs, and their names were *Simple*, *Sloth*, and *Presumption*. Compassion induced Christian to awake them, which he did by calling to them, and telling them of their danger. They opened their eyes; and after being warned that they were like sailors, who sleep on the mast, with a dead sea beneath, to which there was no bottom; that their adversary, thus finding them, would devour them; and that all the aid that Christian could give should be afforded: notwithstanding this warning and this offer, Simple replied, "I see no danger;" Sloth replied, "I must have a little more sleep;" and Presumption said, "Every one must stand upon his own bottom." Having thus replied, they laid down again to sleep, and Christian went on his way. These men are not only in the professing world, but Simple, Sloth, and Presumption are, as principles in our own minds, causing us to feel their effects, in our folly, our

indolence, or our pride. To Simplicity may be referred those persons who, professing Christianity, are content to take it upon the recommendation of others, without any examination of their own. Like Ignorance, of whom ere long we shall have to speak, they say, "It is the religion of my country,—of my fathers,—or of my acquaintance; it was, and is good enough for them; why should it not be so for me?" How absurd! Popery and Heathenism may plead the same; and we, according to this reasoning, instead of enjoying the light and freedom of the Gospel, might still remain shrouded in darkness and superstition. Strange as it may seem, it is in their eternal concerns alone that these persons close their eyes against the light, and their ears against the voice of Scripture and reason. Well then may they be represented as asleep; and, by the fetters on their legs, as in a state of slavery. It may be that some who hear me are under one of the very awakenings thus described by Bunyan. Should this be the case I would say to them, Religion is of infinite moment. Do not take it up until you have tried it by the word of God, and by its effects upon others. Be assured that there is a vitality and power in Christianity that you are entire strangers to, but which you must be the subjects of, before you can enter the kingdom of heaven.

Sloth, although probably a wiser man than Simple, is equally exposed to danger, and

equally difficult to make sensible of it. He is a lazy professor of the Gospel, too well assured of the truths of Christianity to reject them altogether, and too indolent to obtain, and enjoy, the consolations flowing from them. You seldom see him at the house of God on the Sabbath morning, *that* day not commencing with him, until about five o'clock in the afternoon; when, remembering that decency and conscience demand his attendance, he prepares to give it. It is under the most alarming part of the sermon, that he begins to open his eyes, that he resolves to alter his conduct, by becoming attentive and diligent. To-morrow morning shall witness the commencement of this reformation. How delightful will be the change to his own feelings!—how gratifying to others! He has become now an altered man, a consistent professor of the Gospel, a blessing to the church! How pleasing the anticipation of *that*, which, under existing circumstances, never can be accomplished! For look!—in the very midst of all these resolutions, he has fallen asleep in his pew, having just murmured, "Yet a little more!" When he next awakes I would entreat you to remind him, that an hour has been long predicted in which it is declared that some, although once dead, yet believing in Christ, shall live. Although impossible to obliterate the recollection of the past, it may yet please God to sanctify it by exciting gratitude for the mercy which has been exercised. To that mercy the slothful professor

is commended, not merely by the speaker, but by every minister of the Gospel who knows the value of his soul, and who feels the importance of its salvation.

Presumption has chosen his own path to heaven, and insolently repels every effort to convince him of his danger, or to reclaim him from it. The truths of the Gospel must bend to his interpretation of them; and he cares not what creed others profess, so that he may retain his own. He probably disowns Antinomianism, while in heart he loves, and in life he practises it. How can this man be saved?—He may be known by the following marks: By the offence he takes, when, in Christian affection, his errors are pointed out;—by his anger at that preaching which reaches his case, and disturbs his conscience;—and by the assurance with which he speaks of his own knowledge of the way of salvation. If a comparison may be instituted —of the three, this is the most hopeless case. The simple may become wise; the sluggard may be goaded to diligence, or may be won by the example of others; while the presumptuous man rejects, with disdain, the most friendly interference, and the most affectionate advice. The line of our conduct towards such characters is clearly marked out in the word of God. It is our duty, affectionately and faithfully, to remind them of their sin, and to warn them of their danger; to pray for them; and, by example and precept, to bring them, instrumentally, to see

their error, and to apply to the Saviour for deliverance.

It has been said, that simplicity, sloth, and presumption, as principles, have each an existence in our breasts, and are discovered by their effects. We have felt angry that the sincerity of our profession, and the genuineness of our principles, should be suspected; and instead of giving a reason of the hope within us, with meekness and with fear, we have sometimes thought an unwarrantable liberty has been taken with our understandings and judgment. —How simple! We have admitted excuses for our indifference to the means of grace for which we should have condemned others; we have neglected opportunities of glorifying God, which, had they been used, would have brought to our own souls peace and joy; but upon which we now reflect with shame. In a thousand instances, "we have left undone those things which we ought to have done."—How slothful! Our presumption has, in many instances, equalled our folly and sloth; we have drawn consolation more from our knowledge of the way of salvation than from our being found in it. We have presumed upon our past experience, instead of examining into the present state of our souls; and we have calculated upon our future advances in the divine life, while we have remained comparatively unconcerned for the little use we have made of our past mercies.—How presumptuous! May the sleep, the fetters, and the subsequent

destruction of Simple, Sloth, and Presumption, remain as monitors during the rest of our journey!

The path or way, in which Christian found these men, was narrow, and walled up on each side. The walls were called Salvation; and, while the Pilgrim stood pitying their misery and stupidity, his attention was directed to two other men, who had climbed to the top of the wall, on the left side of the road, and who eventually came into it. Their names were *Formalist* and *Hypocrisy;* and who, seeing Christian, appeared anxious to join him. In the course of the conversation which ensued, they described themselves as from the land of *Vain Glory*, and they were going for *praise* (not for salvation) to Mount Zion; that, for a thousand years past, it has been the practice of their countrymen to spare themselves the trouble of going round to the Wicket Gate, by climbing over the wall as they had done; and that, being in the way, it was to them a matter of indifference how they came there! It was in vain that Christian urged against them the solemn denunciation of the Saviour, "He that cometh not in by the *Door*, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber;" that they were trespassers, and not pilgrims; and that, as they came into the way without the Lord's direction, so they should, ere long, leave it without his mercy. To this they replied, by scornful reflections upon the Pilgrim's dress,

which so materially differed from their own, and which he acknowledged was given him by the Lord of the way, in exchange for the rags he lost at the foot of the cross. He pointed also to the mark upon his forehead, and told them of the roll which he possessed, expressing at the same time his fear that of all these things they were destitute. It is easier to laugh at an argument than to answer it. Formalist and Hypocrisy laughed at Christian, and left him. It will be our wisdom to follow them a little way, that we may be warned by their example.

They had left Christian but a short time, when they came to the foot of a hill, at which three roads presented themselves; two of them running by the sides of it, and one going directly over it. The latter was exceedingly steep and rugged; this they therefore rejected; and, imagining that the roads would unite at the opposite side of the mountain, Formalist took the one called Danger, and which led to a wood, wherein he was lost: while Hypocrisy took that called Destruction, and which led to a range of dark mountains, where he stumbled and fell, never to rise again!

It is scarcely possible to read the account of these two persons, without stopping to inquire into the circumstances which first induced us to make a profession of religion; remembering, at the same time, that amongst all the characters that have passed before us, one, and only one, has continued to the present stage of the

work.—It is to be feared that there is a fashion in religion, as well as in dress, and that similar reasons may be assigned for the adoption of both; and, should this fashion change, religion would share the fate of a cast-off dress; and that too many professors of Christianity would appear, when thus stripped, *Hypocrites* or *Formalists*. May this never be the case with my hearers!

While it is the solemn and imperative duty of parents to bring up their children in the fear of the Lord, it is equally their duty to teach them, that God alone can change their hearts, and thus render efficacious the means employed for their salvation. This caution has often been lost sight of, by persons who have received a religious education, and have boasted of their advantages, without showing the improvement made of them. Subtract from their religious profession these advantages, and it is to be feared that only a cypher will remain. The importance of these remarks will appear, if it be considered that, by one door alone, we can enter the kingdom of God; and that thousands commence, who never complete, their journey to the celestial kingdom. The perish by they way.

Leaving such characters as we have just described, and who are worth no more than the warning their example affords, we perceive Christian going on before them, until he reaches the foot of the hill Difficulty, at the bottom of which he discovers a spring; and, having drank

of it, and found his strength renewed, he prepares to ascend the hill.—The promise given to Israel, of strength sufficient for every trial and difficulty, is fulfilled in the experience of every individual believer. Christian was now about encountering a difficulty, which only by labour and perseverance, in the strength of the Lord, he could hope to subdue; and, we have already perceived, prepares for it by drinking at the spring. The promises of the Gospel, applied by the Holy Spirit, are here intended; our Lord comparing his gracious influences to a well of water, springing up to everlasting life. Now, as the water in a well constantly finds its level, however often it may be drawn from; so does the grace of God in the soul of a believer. As a principle, it ever remains; and connecting, as it does, with the Lord Jesus Christ, the soul receives from him the strength that it requires. Hence we account for the intrepidity of our martyrs, and that some of them suffered less in the flames than other believers did upon their beds. We sometimes shudder at the idea of their sufferings, supposing ourselves called to the endurance of them; forgetful that, if called, the same strength which was imparted to them would be granted us.

The hill itself, described as steep, and its path as rugged, Christian now began to ascend; and, however great his labour was, he had the consolation of knowing, that it was his appointed way. At first he began to run: he was soon

obliged to walk; and, at length, to go upon his hands and knees, on account of the steepness and irregularity of the road. With much labour he reached a resting-place, half way up the hill. It was a pleasant arbour, prepared by the Lord of the way, for the refreshment of those pilgrims who might reach it. We are left either to guess at the difficulty represented by the hill: or, reasoning from our own experience, to infer, that, as every believer has some one or more painful exercises peculiar to himself, this is designed to show the manner in which it is to be surmounted.—*A state of comparative poverty*, to which the children of God are from affluence sometimes reduced, is no trifling difficulty. To press forward under the frowns of Providence—to meet gloomy instead of smiling countenances—to read, in the averted eye, an unwillingness to be recognised—and still to be found in the house of God, as indifferent now to the coolness, as formerly to the warmth of mere worldly professors, sheds a lustre around the name of him, whose poverty has resulted from circumstances which he could neither foresee nor avoid.

Some powerful and constant temptation is often found amongst the difficulties of a believer, and which he fears he shall not be able to overcome. It may also be of that secret nature which prevents him from opening his mind to others. He tries to lose it in the cares of business; but, like his shadow, it is inseparable from his person.

He enters the house of God, hoping that the sanctity of the place, and the importance of his business in it, will repel the intruder; but he hopes in vain. As the fowls came down upon Abraham's sacrifice, so does this ill-omened bird of prey pursue him to the house of God, and fasten upon his soul, almost as soon as driven from it. His last refuge is the closet, where, upon his knees, he approaches that throne of grace, which, in the name of Christ, was never yet approached in vain.

Persecution, as a painfully steep and sometimes dangerous hill, often lies in the believer's way to heaven; and often does he inquire into the cause which has raised it against him. The duties of his station are conscientiously and regularly performed; every occasion of offence is avoided; and all that he asks in return is, his unalienable right to worship God according to his revealed will, and according to the dictates of an enlightened conscience. This however is not merely refused, but the refusal is sometimes accompanied with ridicule and resentment. To the poor, to the tempted, and to the persecuted, I would say, these difficulties shall eventually bring glory to God, and shall prove a source of peace and joy to our own souls. The time is at no great distance, when they will become evidences of your love to Christ, and of your attachment to his cause,—when they will form the brightest, and most interesting parts of your experience,—when hey

will furnish you with so many answers to the insinuations of the tempter, and cause you to say, "It has been good for me that I have been afflicted."

LECTURE V.

Description of the Arbour on the Hill Difficulty—Distress of Christian at the Loss of his Roll—Characters of Mistrust and Timorous—Christian's Arrival at the Palace Beautiful—Conversation of the Family residing there.

It requires no depth of penetration to discover the cause, why food and rest are sweeter to the labouring, than they are to the indolent man; nor why it is, that rest and refreshment are valued in proportion to the fatigue endured in obtaining them. Our life is a journey; and labour and activity are essential to the enjoyment of its mercies. Applying these remarks to the believer's pilgrimage, it will at once be seen, that Christianity is more than a name,—more than the observance of outward ordinances, and more than the expression of idle wishes to reach the kingdom of heaven. The believer is a warrior, and it will appear, ere long, that he must fight. He is a wrestler, and his promised strength must be tried against principalities and powers. He is a racer, and he must reach the mark before he can obtain the prize. He is a pilgrim, and labour must

precede rest. Such is Christian's experience at this time. With much difficulty he has reached the arbour, described as about midway up the hill, into which he enters, in order that by rest and refreshment he may be able to reach the top of it.

By the arbour may be understood, that rest which the tried and the tempted enjoy between the commencement, and the termination of their distresses, or difficulties. It may also be intended to show, that, as an arbour is but a temporary erection, so the recruiting of our strength is all that we have a right to expect, until our difficulties are surmounted. Indulgence and sleep are, in this case, sinful and dangerous; as, by the first, we become unfitted for exertion; and, by the second, we may be so long detained that the night may overtakeus, ere we reach the close of our day's journey. The neglect of this caution our Pilgrim soon had reason to repent.

Seating himself in the arbour, Christian began to examine his roll, according to the instructions he had received; and imagining that he now had leisure, he probably, with a degree of self-complacency, began to inspect the dress that was given him at the cross. He had come now a considerable part of his journey, satisfied that he had kept the road, according to the directions given him. He had hitherto been preserved from the errors and dangers into which others had fallen; and Bunyan, who, by Christian, never

intended to describe a faultless character, leaves us to infer, that, in the pride which these reflections gave birth to, he fell asleep; and in that sleep the roll fell out of his hand. How important the lesson to us, liable, as we are, to a sinful elevation of mind, by the very mercies which should keep us humble. True, God has kept us where others have stumbled and fallen. In his strength we have gone forward in our Christian course, while many have left it, never to return. What class of feelings should these considerations superinduce? Certainly not those of pride! To the grace, the distinguishing, sovereign grace of God, should the praise be ascribed, remembering that to it alone we owe the difference between ourselves and those we should mourn,—not triumph over.

It may be that God has made us the instruments of doing good to our fellow-creatures. If rich, so that our riches have, like a fertilizing shower, invigorated the souls, and cheered the hearts of those that felt it; is it right that we should arrogate to ourselves the praise due to him alone who gave the means, who blessed with the disposition, and who furnished us with the opportunities of doing good? It was never my happiness to know that eminently useful man, Richard Reynolds, of Bristol; but his name has been embalmed in my memory, since I heard the following reply he made to a lady, who came to acknowledge his kindness to a poor orphan boy: "When he is old enough,"

said the lady, "I will teach him to thank you for your kindness." "Thank *me!*" he replied; "we do not thank the clouds that gave us rain." Might I be permitted to complete the sentence, I would add, I am but the cloud: kindness may be the rain; but God is the giver of both; to God his thanks are due; to him therefore let them be paid. Under the influence of this disposition, the believer will not sleep, where he should only rest; nor reproach himself, as we shall find that Christian did, whose sleep, however sound, was soon disturbed.

He could not have slept long, when one came to him, and awaked him by saying, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise." He immediately started up; and, beginning to run, soon reached the top of the hill. There two men, whose names were *Timorous* and *Mistrust*, met him, and of whom he inquired the reason why they thus run back instead of going forward. Timorous replied, "We too were going to the city of Zion; we had surmounted the difficulties of the hill; but we find, the farther we go, the more dangers we meet; we are therefore returning to the place from whence we set out." To this Mistrust added, "Yes, and just before us we saw a couple of lions; whether sleeping or awake, we did not stop to see; but, fearing lest by them we should be torn in pieces, we are, as Timorous has said, on our return home." Fear is generally infectious

and Christian replied, "You make me afraid; but whither shall I flee to be safe? If I return to my own country, *that* is prepared for fire and brimstone, and I shall certainly perish there; if I can get to the celestial city, I am sure to be in safety. I must venture: to go back is nothing but death; to go forward is fear of death, and life everlasting beyond it;—I will yet go forward." Christian therefore left them, and went forward, while the men in haste went down the hill.

Like the men sent out to search the promised land, such professors of the Gospel as Timorous and Mistrust find nothing but causes for alarm. Their fears discover a lion in every path; and their cowardice flies from every danger that might be braved. Of this description are those who dread the world's laugh, who fear the face of man more than the displeasure of God; who know the way of salvation, but seldom dare to be found in it. This dastardly conduct will not only prove fatal to themselves, but is injurious to others. Our Lord compares his people to sheep; and young disciples are too often led astray by the example of such as we have described. To the young and fearful believer I would say, These men are for *warning*, not for example. Should you meet with one who tells you, that a continuance in the path of duty will subject you to much inconvenience; that you must calculate upon the loss of some of your friends,—and that the good you may obtain

will not compensate for the evil you must endure; that some more favourable time will present itself; and that, until then, it will be prudent to disavow your religious connexions, and abandon your religious profession,—O let the piercing declaration of Christ enter deeply into your soul: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Christian, as has been already observed, went forward; and, remembering the use that he was commanded to make of his roll, put his hand into his bosom for it, and discovered that it was gone. His distress was great, and was expressed in terms of self-reproach on account of his own folly; but mark his conduct,—he went upon his knees before God, and, confessing his folly, supplicated forgiveness. He remembered his sleeping in the arbour with a heavy heart: he returned to it, hoping that he might yet find his roll. Regret and sorrow accompanied him, as he compared his situation to that of Israel, sent back by the way of the Red Sea. He counted, with painful reflection, the steps he had to retread; and remembered that, but for his sloth, he might still have been on his way rejoicing; neither was this distress alleviated by the consideration that the day was drawing towards a close, and that he had reason to fear he should soon be benighted.

While the believer has reason to hope that God who loves him will love him to the end, he

is at the same time taught, that connected with obedience and diligence, are the sensible enjoyments of that love. It is as true in grace, as it is in nature, that "the hand of the diligent maketh rich," while "the soul of the sluggard desires and has nothing." Let him, therefore, who has lost the consolations he once enjoyed, who mourns an absent God, and who says, with Job, "O that I were as in months past; as in the days when God preserved me: when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness!"—let him, I say, sit down, and, in the fear of God, trace to its source this darkness and distress of soul. Having found it, let him follow the example of Christian, by kneeling before God, and acknowledging it. Then, with more diligence than ever the woman searched for the piece of silver, or the man for the sheep which he had lost, let him seek *Him* who turneth the shadow of death into morning, and who has declared, that he will not be sought in vain.

Christian, having reached the arbour, sat down and wept; but, looking beneath the seat, he saw his roll, and, with trembling eagerness, caught it up, and once more safely lodged it in his bosom. With gratitude he acknowledged the goodness of God; and with alacrity and joy did he once more begin to ascend the hill. His trouble, however, was not yet over: for the lions were before him, and the day was fast closing. Under these circumstances it is not

to be wondered, that he determined, if possible, to reach the house at the top of the hill before night. Christian was thus in the situation of those travellers, whose courage and anxiety increase, as they draw nigh the close of their journey. The report of Timorous and Mistrust was correct, as far as it regarded the lions being in the way; for before he could reach the palace Beautiful, and while in a narrow part of the road, he discovered them; and paused while he contemplated the danger to which he was now exposed. The porter, however, whose name was Watchful, saw his fears, and asked: "Is thy strength so small? Fear not the lions, for they are chained; and are placed there for the trial of faith, where it is, and for the discovery of those that have none. Keep in the midst of the path, and no hurt shall come unto thee." Thus encouraged, he went forward, keeping the middle of the path: they roared as he passed, but were unable to reach him; and in a short time he stood before the gate, where he found the porter prepared to receive him.

The lions appear to represent the persecuting laws then in force against believers, forbidding their meetings for public worship, and are therefore stationed near the gate of the palace. Their chains were the restraining power of God, which those alone could enjoy the benefit of, who determined to obey God rather than man, who dared to venture life and liberty in defence of his cause, and for the enjoyment of his ser-

vice; thus affording a display of the power of that grace, and of the sufficiency of that strength, which God has promised to manifest in the experience of his tried and faithful people. Of the rest, it may be said, as in the days of the apostles, "No man dared join himself unto them." It would be improper to quit this part of the subject, without adverting to the obligations we are under to God, for the removal of many of those persecuting edicts, and for the exertions which are making for the abolition of those which remain. The imprisonment of a man for preaching the Gospel is justifiable neither by reason nor Scripture. I am not speaking so much of the act of imprisonment, as of the law which authorizes it. The act of parliament, which imposes a fine of fifty pounds on every one who suffers more than twenty persons to meet in his house for religious worship, although the doors are kept open, is equally indefensible; nor does it remove the objection to say, the place may be registered. A preacher is travelling in a part of the country where the inhabitants are comparatively few; feeling the importance of his work, and the value of souls, he succeeds in collecting a number of persons in the cottage, which, for one night, is to be his resting place, to whom he preaches, and for whom he prays: the congregation is at the close of the service dismissed; and, as the persons composing it retire to their homes, they express their gratitude to God for the opportunity they

have had of hearing the Gospel from the lips of a wayfaring man; but for *this* the owner of the cottage is fined *fifty pounds!* and, unable to pay it, the bed upon which the preacher reposed, with the rest of the furniture, is sold, and the money thus raised is appropriated towards the payment of the fine!! I have discharged a duty in adverting to these *lions*. I desire to express my gratitude, that they are but seldom let loose on society. The time is at no great distance, when we trust that the wisdom of the legislature will send them the way that their progenitors have gone, and that the right to worship God according to the dictates of conscience will be left in the undisturbed possession of our children's children.

We described Christian as having reached the gate of the palace, and meeting there with Watchful, who had encouraged him to pass the lions. The Pilgrim now inquires, "What house is this?" and, "May I lodge here to-night?" and receives for answer, "This house was built by the Lord of the hill, for the relief and security of pilgrims." Watchful, in return, inquires of Christian his name, his native place, the object of his journey, and his destination. To all these he returns satisfactory answers, together with the cause of his coming so late, owing to his sleep in the arbour, and the loss of his roll. He is then informed that one of the family shall be called, who, approving of his conversation, will introduce him to the rest of the family, and

tell him the rules of the house. The porter rang a bell, and, shortly after, a grave and beautiful female appeared, whom he addressed by the name of *Discretion*, and to whom he introduced Christian, informing her that he was on a journey from the City of Destruction; that he was weary and benighted; and wished to lodge there for the night. A few more questions were asked, when Discretion was joined by three more of the family, as lovely as herself, and whose names were *Prudence*, *Piety*, and *Charity*. A sincere and hearty welcome was the result of a few moments' more conversation. As he stepped over the threshold of the door, he was met by the rest of the family, who exclaimed, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; this house was built by the Lord of the hill, on purpose to entertain such pilgrims in." Christian bowed his head; and, following them into the house, found a little temporary refreshment, which he was requested to take until supper was prepared, and, in the meantime, he was desired to favour them with the account of his pilgrimage, from the moment of his setting out to that of his reception at the palace.

Nearly the whole of those events which Christian detailed in the course of the conversation, we have been made acquainted with as they transpired: it will, therefore, be by far the most profitable occupation of our time, if we take this opportunity of describing the beauty and order of a Gospel church, represented by the

palace Beautiful, occasionally mentioning those parts of Christian's experience, which, referring to the state of his mind, can only be discovered as they became the subject of conversation. The motives for this description are various and important; and among them may be observed, that a church is compared by our Lord to a city set on a hill, which the world is welcome to view, preserving that respect for the rights of its inhabitants which they are entitled to. Christianity has never yet shrunk from the severest scrutiny it has been exposed to; it neither seeks nor needs concealment; for although the hatred of persecutors has sometimes driven it to the caves and dens of the earth, it has mever emerged from them without appearing in all the loveliness of proportion, and in all the beauty of order. To display both appears to be the design of the Palace Beautiful.

The simple definition of a Christian church is, A company of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, meeting together, at stated times, for the worship of God, according to his word. It is a *voluntary* association, arising out of the individual wish of pious persons thus to be united, in what is justly called church-membership, after the following order: The person wishing to join the church signifies that wish to the body of members, through the medium of an individual, supposed to be acquainted with the applicant. If no objection is raised, the proposition is received; and generally the next

monthly night is the time appointed for the candidate's appearing before the church, in order that he may describe the manner in which it pleased God so to influence his mind, as to lead to this act of self-dedication to his service. In the interval of the first and second meeting, two experienced persons wait upon the candidate (sometimes accompanied by the minister), who receive from him such particulars of his conversion to God as the church may require; and who, in return, set before him the nature of a public profession of the Gospel, exhorting him to continue steadfast to the end of his life. It is also the duty of the visitors to make every inquiry into his moral character and general conduct. Supposing that the result of these inquiries are favourable, he, at the appointed time, meets the church, and, as he is enabled, describes the dealings of God with his soul, at the same time answering such questions as the minister, or the poorest member, may feel it his duty in affection to ask. The testimony of the visitors is then given, and the candidate withdraws while the sense of the members is taken, as to his eligibility for church-membership. Every individual is at liberty to object; and, on showing ground for objection, the case of the person proposed must stand over until such objection be removed. But, in the event of there being none, the question of admission is put by the minister, when, by lifting up the right hand, the candidate is admitted. He is

therefore recalled, and a solemn charge is given him, to remember that he is in the presence of a just, a holy, and a merciful God; that the eyes of the world will now be upon him; and that every deviation from the path of rectitude will, by the wicked, be brought as a charge against that cause with which he has now identified himself. At the close of this address, the minister offers his hand, saying, "As your minister (or pastor), I, in the name of the church, give you the right hand of Christian fellowship, and welcome you amongst us." The new-made member, at the close of the meeting, is solemnly commended to God by prayer; and sometimes a hymn, suited to the occasion, is sung. On the following Lord's day, the person received is again addressed by the minister, and he, for the first time, partakes of the sacrament of our Lord's Supper. His subsequent conduct is subject to the discipline of the church, the extent of whose power, even in cases of aggravation, is limited by the apostolic injunction, "From such withdraw thyself."

Were it possible to remove the odium of terms, against which we have contracted an aversion without being sensible of their import, I would ask, with all the confidence which truth can afford, Is there any thing in the order of a Christian church, such as has been described, contrary to the word of God, or inimical to society? Would the members of such a society league with the enemies of their country,

or imbrue their hands in the blood of their fellow-creatures? Far from it! They are commanded to pray for the prosperity of the country wherein they dwell; and they are taught, that a most essential part of their religion is, to live in peace with all men,—to do good to all, even to their enemies. To vindicate, therefore, the churches of God from the charge of being injurious to the welfare of man,—to show to the enemies of these churches how groundless and wicked their suppositions and charges were, when they asserted that they were formed for seditious purposes, or for those workings of wickedness which heathens might be ashamed of,—and to exhibit to the world the beauty and order of a Christian church,—appears to be the aim of Bunyan in his description of the Palace Beautiful.

In the course of Christian's account of himself, he refers to the secret workings of his mind, as to the state of his family he had left behind. His wife and children lay heavily upon his mind, and he would gladly have brought them with him. The reason he assigned for their refusal to accompany him, was the fears of the former, lest she should lose the enjoyments of the present world, and the attachment of the latter to its follies and vanities. It was in vain that he represented the danger to which they were exposed, from the threatened destruction of the world; that his tears and trembling must convince them of his sense

of their danger, and of his anxiety on their account. All however appeared lost upon them; he seemed to them as *Lot* appeared in the eyes of his sons-in-law,—as one that mocked. Unlike some, who bear the Christian name, and who imagine that sourness of temper forms a component part of Christianity, Christian, by the mildness of his temper, and the gentleness of his manners, endeavoured to win his family to the love of a pilgrim's life, subjecting himself to their censure of that tenderness of conscience which should have endeared him to them.

One hundred and sixty years have elapsed since Christian described the opposition of his family to a pilgrim's life; the descendants of that family are still in being, and it is probable that some who hear me will say, "Such is my case: often have I prayed for her, whom no threatenings can alarm, whom no promises can allure. Although she shares in the affections of my soul, and knows that my happiness is bound up with hers; although she acknowledges the importance of salvation, and trembles at the thoughts of death;—still her attachment to the world is unshaken; her indifference to Christianity is unconquerable; and, dear as we are to each other here, I dread the separation which must ensue, unless God, in the exercise of his mercy, be pleased to change her heart. Oh, that she were wise! that she understood the things which make for her everlasting

peace! that she would give herself up to God, and walk with me in that path which leads to his right hand! One sad consolation remains; I have humbly endeavoured to deliver my soul of that responsibility which has lain upon it. I have entreated her with tears; I have encouraged her by example; and I have warned her in faithfulness;—the rest I must leave with God,—wife and children are in his hands." Such are the feelings of many, in reference to those who are near and dear to them; and to such I would offer one solemn admonition: The prayers of your husband, or father, are heard in heaven, and will be answered in mercy, or in judgment. They are your best and eternal interests which lie near his heart. Listen then to his advice, and follow his example. Be assured that wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and that the paths of God are paths of peace.

I have thus endeavoured to show the nature of that conversation, which usually passes at what are called Church Meetings, held amongst the generality of Dissenters. I have also described the mode of admitting members at those meetings, together with the feelings of those, who, under the fullest convictions of the worth of their own souls, are enabled thus to decide for God, whatever the indifference, or the opposition of their families may be. In closing these remarks, it may be asked, "Why have you drawn into the light the internal order of our churches, and given in detail the substance

of our conversation?" To which I answer, that we may repel the slanders of the wicked, by showing that these meetings are held in the fear of God, and that their object is his glory, in promoting the happiness, and instrumentally advancing the holiness of one another. I have also done it on the account of those, who are the *victims of domestic persecution*, and who are charged with improper motives for their attendance upon such meetings as have been described. I have finally recorded these things to show, that every accession of number made to our churches, is the result of that choice, which, as the gift of God, is man's unalienable right.

The characters by whom this conversation was held, are intended to describe the temper of mind manifested on the occasion referred to. The minister's name is Watchful; and it is a name which well describes the nature of his office. He saw Christian in doubt, and he removed it; the Pilgrim wished to be admitted into the family, and he consulted Discretion, by whom he discovered that Christian's account of himself was clear and consistent. Prudence, Piety, and Charity, followed up the inquiries which Discretion had began, and which, when completed, drew from the whole of the family the welcome, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord." His entrance was the cause of joy to the whole house; his account of himself interested and edified the hearers; and his own

happiness may be conceived, better than it can be described. It was at this time that supper was announced, the particulars of which must be reserved for the ensuing Lecture.

LECTURE VI.

Celebration of the Lord's Supper—Description of the Chamber of Peace—Curiosities of the Palace shown to Christian—Distant Views of the Delectable Mountains—The Pilgrim, being armed, recommences his Journey.

To commemorate the dying love of a crucified Saviour, to declare our attachment to his cause, and our belief in the sufficiency of his death, are among the purposes for which the Christian church celebrates the Lord's Supper. There is also another; namely, the renewal of that spiritual strength, which is essential to the prosecution of our Christian journey. It is therefore deeply to be regretted, that ever it should be administered to those, whose life and conversation prove that they are "far from God by wicked works." It is a subject of equal regret, that it should be required as a qualification for civil office. Without questioning the wisdom of those legislators, who raised it as a barrier against the advances of papal intolerance, it certainly may be asked, Does the necessity still continue? Surely some other test might now be selected, by which our constitution might be

fenced around, and our liberties secured against the efforts of bigoted men; and that man will deserve well of the Christian church, whose voice in the senate is successfully raised against the continuance of a practice so completely at variance with the principles of Christianity. If my information be correct, no person can be admitted into any office under the British crown, without producing a certificate of his having partaken of the Lord's Supper, as administered by the established church.

Returning to Christian, we find him seated at the Table of the Lord, and partaking of the *Supper*, which infinite goodness had prepared for him. Feeling the importance of the step he had taken, he submitted with cheerfulness to the examination of the church, and gave a reason for his hopes of salvation. His pilgrimage had been a painful one; but greater was his present enjoyment than all the sufferings which arose out of his past trials. He had still to press forward; and here he found a renewal of that strength, which has ever been imparted to those who, feeling their weakness, rely upon his promise. The table was furnished with *fat things*, —with wine well refined; and the subject of conversation was the love and kindness of him who prepared it. In language which the heart could understand, they spoke of the sufferings the Saviour endured, and of the victories which he achieved. They sang his triumphs, while they celebrated his death, and with joy antici-

pated the period, when, having cleared their way through this waste, howling wilderness,—when, having slain their foes and surmounted their difficulties,—when, having triumphed over Satan, Sin, and Death, they should join their illustrious Leader amidst the sweetness of ten thousand golden harps, and amidst the full tide of harmony, rolling from ten thousand times ten thousand seraphic lips, widening, deepening, and rising as it rolls, until it surrounds the eternal throne of God. Yes, amidst this greatness and grandeur, they hoped to join their Saviour, to be rewarded by his approbation, and to be crowned with glory, with honour, and with immortality.

In the midst of these joyful anticipations, the believer remembers he is still in the field; that the foe has chosen his ground; and that the possession of it he will long and fearfully dispute; remembering these things, he feels his need of the presence of God; and at his table humbly asks it. While asking, he is heard and answered. He contemplates the dangers of the way, as occasions for the display of that grace which he knows will be manifested. He views his enemies as already subdued by the prowess of that arm which will be bared in his defence; and he rises from the table as a giant refreshed with wine, and whose foes are too impotent to create alarm. He believes that his past transgressions have been forgiven; for he has been enabled to confess and forsake them. He be-

lieves that he is interested in the blood and righteousness of a crucified Saviour; for he has made a solemn surrender of himself into his hands. He believes that God, who has loved him, will love him to the end; for, as he left the table, the Pilgrim exclaimed, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."

To Christian the day had been a long, but an interesting one. He had surmounted the difficulties of the hill; he had been received into the family inhabiting the palace; he had partaken of the Supper of the Lord; and he was now conducted to the Chamber of Peace, where, after reviewing the mercies of the day, he fell asleep. His resting-place was an upper room, the window of which was towards the *east*—thus beautifully describing the tranquillity of those who, having devoted the day to God, can safely and sweetly rest at night. It is still in the recollection of many who hear me, that, with a class of feelings never before experienced, they retired from the services of that day, which had witnessed their dedication to God by a participation, for the first time, of the sacred symbols of the cross; that they said, "This day I have consecrated myself to the service of him who loved me, and gave himself for me. Oh, that I may never be suffered to return to the world, from which I have been delivered! May I be enabled to hold on, under all my discouragements, looking to Jesus, the author, until he becomes

the finisher of my faith! Thus, Lord, I commit my spirit into thy hands, believing that, in thy name, and in the greatness of thy strength, I shall enter that rest which remaineth to thy people." The sweetness of sleep, following such reflections as these, need not be described. Christian awoke in the morning, and, in praise to God, acknowledged his mercies throughout the night. In the morning also the family also again met, when it was proposed that the Pilgrim should remain with them, until he had seen the *Rarities* of the house.

We shall perhaps be better acquainted with this part of the Pilgrim's Progress, if by the expression Rarities we understand the *essential truths of the Gospel*, as stated and explained in the ministry under which Christian now sat. The Bible, emphatically called the *Study*, was the first rarity to which Pilgrim's attention was directed; and which is thus designated, in order to show, that in it is contained all that God has revealed, and all that man is bound to receive;—to show that it is not the bare possession, but a diligent and attentive perusal of it, that is here intended;—to show also, that as a study is a place of retirement, so the best means of acquiring a knowledge of divine truth, is by retirement from the world, and deep and solemn meditation upon the word of God.

To ministers, these remarks will apply with peculiar force. A young minister once waited upon an aged one, and with much concern said,

"Sir, I fear that I must soon decline preaching, for I seem to have exhausted my stock of divinity." "Be thankful," was the reply, "that you have neither exhausted God, nor your Bible." It is to be feared, that to the neglect of these may be attributed many of the complaints of aged and experienced Christians, who, contrasting some of our modern sermons with the gigantic productions of former days, are tempted to exclaim, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." Far be it from the preacher to speak in a manner that would give needless pain, or offence, to any who are engaged in the work of the ministry; but he may be allowed to suggest the great difference between searching for new ideas to please the ear, and that solid food which alone can satisfy the hungry soul. "How did you hear the preacher this morning?" was an inquiry once made at the door of a chapel near London. "With pleasure," was the reply; "I always hear him with *pleasure*, but never with *profit*."—Oh, but this is fearful! He would be condemned for cruelty, who should smile at a man because he went pleasantly to execution. How much ought we to tremble at that approbation, which merely results from the satisfaction of our hearers, while we know that their hearts are unchanged by the grace of God,—while they tell us of the excellency of those sermons, the power of which they have never felt,—and while they admire

that mode of preaching, which does every thing but reach and affect the heart! Should these remarks lead us more frequently to visit the Study, and to remain longer when there than heretofore,—should they induce us to seek a more intimate acquaintance with the truths it contains, and cause us to seek the profit more than the pleasure of our hearers, they will not have been made in vain.

Among the records in the Study, was to be seen the genealogy of our Lord Jesus Christ, described as the Son of the Ancient of Days, by eternal generation; where, through a long succession of illustrious names, he might be traced from the child born, to the Mighty God; from the days of Cæsar Augustus, back to that eternity, wherein the Almighty had not as yet put forth his all-creative energies; when Father, Son, and Eternal Spirit, as one triune Jehovah, dwelt alone; when in council they sat, and, by one intuitive glance, surveyed their future work of mercy and of power, calling by name the things that were not, as things which already had their being; when the great, mysterious plan of redemption was formed; and when, as believers, our souls were given to him who, in the fulness of time, was to assume our nature, and die the just for the unjust, that we might be brought nigh to God.

In the records also were to be found a register of the many *appearances* under which he had revealed himself to the objects of his love. As

the God who provided Abraham's sacrifice;—as the I AM, who, from the burning bush, commanded Moses to claim from the proud Egyptian king his heritage and portion;—as the leader under whom Joshua conducted the embattled tribes of Israel from conquering to conquer;—in a word, as David's Shepherd, as Israel's King, and as God's salvation to the ends of the earth. Nor were his *acts* omitted in the Study. It was there written, how deep his humiliation, and how great his sufferings were for the fallen sons of men; that after a life passed in the exercise of the most unbounded benevolence, he suffered a death the most degrading and painful; that in his death he shook the gates of hell, spoiled the principalities, and dethroned the powers of darkness: that, rising from the Arimathean's tomb, he seized the last enemy, and, wrenching open the monster's jaws, he tore out his sting, exclaiming, as he cast it to the ground and crushed it with his heel, "O Death, where is thy sting?" at the same time writing upon the rock, as he left it, "Where is thy victory?" Nor was his return to heaven unnoticed. Guarded by angels, and witnessed by apostles, he ascended on high, leading captivity captive. Having done these things, it was written of him, that many hundreds of the human race were admitted into his service, and were placed in such habitations, as neither by length of days, nor decays of nature, could be dissolved. Many of the worthy acts of those servants, before

they were placed in their eternal dwelling places, were also recorded; that they had "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

The glorified state of believers, after having served God here, is all that is intended by their *habitations*. Hence the apostle says, "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

The length to which this part of the Lecture has extended forbids our saying more, than that the Study contained an account of the Lord's willingness to receive *any* into his favour, however little they had deserved it. Prophecies and predictions of events, that must be accomplished to the joy of believers, and to the everlasting confusion of their enemies, completed the Study of the Palace Beautiful.

On the following day, Christian was shown the *Armoury*, which was provided for pilgrims, ere they encountered the enemies which they must meet on their way to the celestial kingdom. It consisted of swords, shields, helmets, breastplates,—a weapon called All Prayer, and shoes which would not wear out. So great also was this supply, that were the soldiers of the Lord as the stars of heaven for number, there

would be found sufficient for them all! As we shall soon have to contemplate Christian equipped for the field, we shall reserve a description of the uses to which these pieces of armour were to be applied, until then.

The instruments by which the servants of God had accomplished many of his purposes, were also shown the Pilgrim. Among them he saw Moses's rod,—the hammer and nail, with which Jael slew Sisera,—the pitchers, trumpets, and lamps, with which Gideon routed the armies of Midian,—the ox-goad of Shamgar,—the jaw-bone which Sampson used,—David's sling and stone,—and the sword with which the Lord will destroy the Man of Sin, in that day when he shall rise up to the prey.

One great design of the ordinances of God's house is, that, by the consolation and strength they impart, we may be the better prepared for the remainder of our duties and trials. Christian's enjoyment has been already described: he has, however, a fierce and inveterate enemy to meet, and a painful and dangerous path to tread. It is therefore in reference to these, that he is now favoured with a view of the *Delectable Mountains;* and that, upon his leaving the palace, he will be armed for the conflict he has to sustain, By the former, we may understand those seasons of enjoyment which the believer experiences, when having overcome many of his enemies, and having surmounted many of his difficulties, he is blessed with that communion with

God, which gives him an assurance of the promised land, shows him the nature of the felicity he has to expect, and creates in his soul an earnest desire to be absent from the body, that he may be present with the Lord. In order that Christian might be indulged with this prospect, he is conducted to the top of the house, and directed to look *south*. He did so, and at a distance he saw a beautiful mountainous country, diversified with woods and vineyards, and enriched with fruit-trees, flowers, and springs of water. Upon asking the name of the country, he was informed it was called *Emmanuel's Land;* that it was the common right of the pilgrims travelling to the Celestial City; and that, when he reached the place, the Shepherds would from it show him the gate of the city. Thus encouraged, he expressed his readiness to go forward; to which the company in the house consented, but requested him first to go into the Armoury, in order that, by being accoutred, he might be prepared for his foes. This was done, and his friends walked with him to the gate, where he was informed that another pilgrim had just passed on before him, the name of whom he learned was *Faithful.*

Christian's armour was offensive and defensive. Of the former was the word of God, called the Sword of the Spirit. With this weapon our Lord fought the foe of God and man, and eventually caused him to quit the field. When combating the powers of pagan and papal darkness,

martyrs and confessors used no other. At the bar of their enemies, or upon the rack, whether solicited by the purple and fine linen of this world, or dressed in their shrouds, and chained to the black and bloody stake; in meekness, and in the fear of God, they repelled the attacks of their enemies, and conquered them, although they fell. Infidelity has felt the keenness of its edge; it has brought the pride of philosophy to the ground; it has cleared its way through the ranks of opposing hosts; and opened a passage for the soldiers of the Cross, which has led them to glory, to happiness, and to immortality. It is the weapon that God will use to destroy the Man of Sin, to subjugate the empire of the Beast, and to conquer the world. We, as believers, are warriors; and upon our own use of the word of God, depends our victory over our spiritual foes. To parley with temptation, is to admit the enemy within the walls of a besieged city; to encounter it with any other weapon, is to shake a spear at which this Leviathan will laugh. Thousands have been defeated in the strength of their own resolutions, while all have conquered in the strength of the word of God. Its use in Christian's combat with Apollyon will soon be apparent.

The *Helmet of Salvation* is figuratively descriptive of that security, which the knowledge of our salvation is calculated to impart. Secure in the love, and in the power of God, the Christian has every thing to hope, and nothing to

fear: his head is covered in the day of battle, and no weapon, yet formed, has been able to destroy him. Thus highly favoured, it is with him as with the soldier who enters the field under the fullest assurance that he shall leave it a conqueror and unhurt. He may then smile at the power, and laugh at the threats, of his foes. Applying these remarks to the Christian soldier, the word of God declares that he shall come off *more* than conqueror, through Christ who hath loved him.

The shield is emphatically called, by the apostle, the Shield of *Faith;* and is described as being "able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Although this piece of armour may now have fallen into disuse, we are informed in the Scriptures, that Abraham received from God the fullest assurance of his presence and protection, under the promise that he would be his "Shield and his exceeding great reward." The shield, borne upon the arm, could cover each part of the body, as it was exposed, receiving the arrows, the darts, and the blows which were directed against the person who was armed with it; and such are the uses of that faith which accompanies salvation. Our faith in the atoning blood and finished righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ intercepts all the darts which are hurled against our unworthiness as sinners; our faith in the power and in the promises of God, meets and repels the temptations which are directed against our

endurance to the end, and our right to the blessings of salvation; while our faith in the continued operations of the Holy Spirit throws off the temptations to indifference and carnal security, and shows the necessity of "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts;" teaching us, at the same time, that we are to live "soberly, righteously, and godly, in the present world." Well then might the apostle say, "Above all, taking the Shield of Faith."

The *Breast-plate of Righteousness* at once describes the necessity of heart-religion, and shows the manner in which that religion is secured. Where there is nothing to lose, there can be nothing to guard. A breast-plate of righteousness can therefore only be worn by the man, in whose heart is the fear of God, the love of a crucified Saviour, and the work and witness of the Holy Spirit. These are the objects of the enemy's malice: and against them some of his fiercest attacks are directed. Now by what means are these secured? I may err in my answer, but I do it not intentionally, when I say, that the practical holiness of a believer's life, manifested by the closeness of his walk with God,—by his devotedness to his service,—and by his zeal for his glory,—forms, in this respect, his great security from the assaults of the enemy. I am aware that some will cry, *Legality!*—the man sends us to our holiness for security, instead of the salvation of Christ!! It is easier to cry down an argument, than to answer it.

Were I conscious that such is the tendency of that which I have just spoken, I would retract it, and leave this part of the subject to abler hands; but let it be remembered, that although the salvation of Christ is so perfect that man can add nothing to it, and so secure that he can take nothing from it, still our interest in that salvation can only be evinced by the holiness of our life and conversation. Security, without these, is Antinomianism, not Christianity. It should also be borne in mind, that whenever the people of God have fallen by their wounds, and for a time have been left in the power of the enemy, it has been in consequence of their neglecting to buckle on the breast-plate of righteousness. The intoxication of Lot, the probable indolence of David, and the presumption of Peter, are proofs of this conclusion. May we not, therefore, infer the necessity of a holiness which may be seen by others, as well as felt by ourselves; and that only in the exercise of it have we a right to expect the security we need, and the blessings which are promised? Our Lord, from a mountain, commanded his disciples to let their light so shine before men, as that they might see their good works, and glorify their Father who was in heaven.

All Prayer is a weapon, the strength of which has been proved as often as it has been tried. It is in the possession of the weakest believer, and is essential to the success of the strongest. Its name explains its nature, which is intended

to describe that state of soul, to which the believer is sometimes reduced, when the issue of all his trials and difficulties is given into the hands of God by prayer, and left to his sovereign disposal. Sooner or later the Christian must be brought to see, that neither his faith, nor his holiness,—his reflection upon the past, nor his assurance of the future,—have any saving virtue in them, independent of the agency of God, the Holy Spirit; and that he may not make a saviour of any of them singly, or of all of them collectively: he feels, at times, as if stripped of all, and is consequently left to experience, that upon the sovereign mercy of God in Christ Jesus, every hope for salvation must rest. Long before it comes to this, the Formalist and Hypocrite retire from a profession, the wages of which they consider inadequate to the labour. The Antinomian has fallen into a state of wretched carnal security. The Pharisee's life and salvation are bound up with his duties, and he remains with them; while the genuine believer in the Lord Jesus still follows after God, through fears and foes, through darkness and distress, hoping against hope, believing against unbelief, and trusting God, after all traces of his dealings have been (to his apprehension) obliterated; crying, from the very depth of his misery, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Such is All Prayer.

The *Shoes, which would not wear out*, were made of iron and brass; and a knowledge of

the mode formerly employed to annoy an invading enemy, will remove the seeming obscurity of the expression. In narrow defiles, through which the enemy had to pass, it was customary to fix in the ground sharp-pointed stakes; and the confusion that must ensue, as the soldiers trod upon them, can be readily conceived. Many of them must of necessity fall; while those behind, unacquainted with the obstruction, would, by pressing forward, add to the confusion, and thus leave them an easy prey to the forces engaged against them. To guard against this, God declares that his people's shoes should be iron and brass; that they should neither stumble nor fall; but that, as their day was, so should be their strength.

Thus, then, was Christian armed; and, in the strength of the Lord, he once more prepared for his journey. The Valley of Humiliation was before him; a formidable and cruel foe was prepared to meet him, and dispute his passage to everlasting glory. The manner of his setting out, an account of the enemy, and the long and dangerous conflict he had with him, will form the substance of the ensuing Lecture.

LECTURE VII.

Christian leaves the Palace Beautiful—Enters the Valley of Humiliation, and meets Apollyon—Description of him—Their Conversation and Combat—Apollyon defeated.

It is among the evils of our earthly portion, that we must sooner or later separate from our nearest and dearest connexions: that we must pass through those trials, wherein God alone can help us; and meet those enemies, out of whose hands he alone can deliver us. Neither the sincerity of our intentions, nor the holiness of our lives, can exempt us from the apostolic declaration—"Through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of God." It is therefore our duty to provide against it; and, by a solemn surrender of ourselves into the hands of God, to be prepared for the issue, whatever that issue may be.

It is under these circumstances that Christian presents himself in the moment of his departure from the palace. We have already described the armour with which he is now invested; we have been permitted to witness the order, and listen to the conversation, of the family he is on the point of leaving; we shall shortly discover the adversary with whom he has to contend, and the nature of that grace by which alone he can be subdued. As the Pilgrim left the gate of the palace, he said to Watchful,

who stood there, "Good Porter, the Lord be with thee, and add to all thy blessings much increase, for the kindness thou hast showed to me." At the bottom of the hill, down which he was now going, lay the Valley of Humiliation; and, if Christian found difficulty in reaching the top, it was not without danger that he got to the bottom. His kind friends, however, were with him; and, although he once or twice slipped, he was preserved from falling. If ever Discretion, Piety, Charity, and Prudence, are necessary, as companions, it is when we are going down the Valley of Humiliation. Having reached it, they gave him a loaf of bread, a bottle of wine, a cluster of raisins, and separated, — his late companions to return to the palace, and Christian to prosecute his journey.

The valley itself may have a two-fold reference; it may refer to some humbling dispensation of Providence; or to that state of mind, wherein the believer feels, more than usually, his unworthiness before God. Among the difficulties of the hill, I noticed a state of comparative poverty; I may here be permitted to add, in reference to the Valley of Humiliation, that the *loss of property* has a tendency to strip man of much of his imaginary self-importance, and to place him more upon a level with those he formerly thought but little of. It was one of Job's complaints, "But now they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose

fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock." This is a state of mind, so inimical to *that* which the Gospel requires, that, in the exercise of God's most holy wisdom and providence, those whom he loves are brought to see the evil of it, and to mourn that they have ever been its subjects. Elevations in society have the same effect upon the mind, as standing upon elevated and precipitous parts of the earth have upon the senses; the objects beneath us appear smaller than they really are; —if we are seen at all, we must be looked *up* to;—and, if conversed with, it can rarely be upon the same level with ourselves. Now all this is very bad, and unwarranted by any adventitious circumstances of fortune. As a rich man, no one ever entered the kingdom of God. "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." The Lord therefore convinces us of the inutility of riches, by compelling us to do without them. I have seen a poor professor of the Gospel speak to a rich one: the latter lent his ear, but not his countenance; for he averted his face, as if there was something infectious in the breath of poverty. He was never subject to deafness, but when spoken to by a poor person! For all such, the Valley of Humiliation is the fittest place. It did Job much good; for it made him acknowledge, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

The loss of relatives or friends will bring a man into the Valley of Humiliation. Secure in the enjoyment of our social mercies, it is exceedingly difficult to believe that they are only lent, not given: "I shall die," said Job, "in my nest." When? "When the Almighty was yet with me, and when my children were about me." Such is the language of many a fond parent, whose life appears bound up with his children's, and who imagines that existence without them would be insupportable. I am aware that the subject I have in hand is a delicate one, and that the discussion of it may awaken a painful class of feelings in the breasts of those who apprehend the loss of their children, as well as in the breasts of those who have recently been bereaved. It should, however, be borne in mind, that God, who does nothing in vain, may have reasons for visitations of this nature, which are beyond the utmost reach of man here to comprehend. We have to learn the sufficiency of God, as our portion, and to live upon him alone. As to those that are removed, they are but taken from the evil to come.—What the nature of heavenly employment may be, we cannot tell. Heaven is surely not the seat of indolence. Why then may not the Lord, by their removal, design them for his service there, rather than here; and thus, by one dispensation, humble us, and exalt the objects of our affections?

It is easier to reason upon painful dispensations, than it is to bear them. Few therefore

have been thus exercised without stumbling. Sometimes the goodness of God, in this or that peculiar providence, has been questioned. At other times a suggestion has crossed the mind: Is it in mercy, or in judgment? Or if the goodness of God has been admitted; and that therefore mercy, and not judgment, has been its cause; then is it necessary that I should be thus exercised? To every inquriy of this description, one answer may be sufficient. The purposes of God, in reference to his people, are made up in love and mercy: he has declared, that all things shall work together for their good; and that, however dark and mysterious his dealings may be to us, the issue of them all shall bring glory to his name, and solid and lasting good to our souls. It is necessary that we should be humbled; and God alone knows the most effectual means whereby it can be accomplished. The hardest, but the most useful, lesson we have to learn in the school of Christ, is that which begins with, "Not my will, but thine be done;" and ends with, "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

The Valley of Humiliation may refer to a peculiarly humble state of mind, without the intervention of outward dispensations. It may proceed from increasingly clear views of the holiness of God, contrasted with the exceeding sinfulness of our nature. It may arise out of the constant discoveries we are making of the deceitfulness and depravity of our hearts; or it

may proceed from our fears, lest, in the day we shall be weighed in the balance of God's sanctuary, we shall be found wanting. Whatever may be its cause, these are the conclusions we may draw from it—That the lower we lie, the safer we are; that we shall, ere long, have reason, with the Psalmist, to say, "It has been good for me that I have been afflicted;" and that, until then, we may reckon our painful dispensations as expressions of God's regard; and, if acquiesced in, as evidences of progressive holiness.

Christian had not gone far in the Valley of Humiliation,* when, at a distance, he saw crossing a field, *one* whom Bunyan calls a foul fiend; and who, by the direction he took, seemed determined to meet him. His name was Apollyon (in English, *A Destroyer*); and, as he advanced, the Pilgrim paused, uncertain whether it would be right for him to go back, or whether he should stand his ground. He, however, remembered that he had no armour for his back; that flight would only expose him to certain destruction; and that, supposing the saving of his life to be all that he had in view, the most effectual mode of doing this, would be by meeting, rather than by flying from, his adversary. The monster drew nigh; and we have the following description

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* Bunyan calls the scene of combat *Forgetful Green.*

of him: He was clothed with scales, like a fish (they were his pride); he had wings like a dragon, feet like a bear; his mouth was as the mouth of a lion; and out of his belly came fire and smoke. As he came up to Christian, he beheld him with a disdainful countenance, and began to question him. Before, however, we enter upon the conversation which is about taking place, it may be prudent to offer a few observations upon the nature and extent of Satanic influence, as connected with the pilgrim's progress. My hearers are aware, that by some this influence is altogether denied; while, by others, much of that wickedness is ascribed to it, which arises out of the depravity of the human heart. The identity of a fallen, spiritual being, possessing considerable power in the world,—hostile to that which is good, and at variance with the people of God,—appears to be clearly made out in the Scriptures. That this power, however great, must be limited, appears equally clear; and perhaps by showing what he cannot do, we may form an estimate of what he can. The inquiry may lead to conclusions, in which we shall find ourselves deeply interested.

The scriptural account of the matter is, that, for reasons known only to God, it pleased him to permit the appearance of moral evil in heaven, some time antecedent to the fall of man upon earth; and that, under its influence, a considerable number of the heavenly host engaged in desperate rebellion against God. The issue

may be anticipated: they were defeated and expelled heaven; when one of them, probably moved with envy against God, succeeded in seducing our first parents. Their posterity became involved in the consequences of their fall; and, in their tempter, or seducer, the descendants of Adam and Eve have ever found a bitter, and a restless foe. He is called "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience." He is represented as having at his disposal myriads of fallen spirits, through whose instrumentality he accomplishes his various purposes of hatred and cruelty. It has already been said that his power, however great, is limited, and his reign must eventually close. He can neither defeat nor thwart the merciful designs of God, as they refer to the salvation of his people. He cannot finally prevail against the subjects of divine grace, so as to prevent their salvation. He cannot discern the thoughts of their hearts, while living in the fear of God. This is God's exclusive prerogative: "*I* the Lord search the heart." He may reason from observation, and conclude from analogy. Skilful in the selection, and prompt in the application of temptation, he may judge which is most likely to succeed. He cannot prevent the progressive holiness of saints. He may distress and harass them, while it is carrying forward; but a believer's sanctification is the work of God, and in the hands of the Spirit it must reach its completion. Nei-

ther can he prevent the conversion of sinners, although the sinner's heart, by nature, be like a fortified castle, every avenue to which is guarded. Although he has leagued himself with Apollyon against God, and has hardened himself to desperation against him; yet, in that moment when the stronger than them both shall exercise his power, the proud and obdurate heart of man must stoop; the agreement, though strong as. Death, must be disannulled; and the sinner, once the prey of the spoiler, is left to choose the service of that God, to the exercise of whose mercy and power he owes his deliverance. These, then, are amongst the purposes, the accomplishment of which Apollyon cannot prevent.

It will here probably be asked, What is to be understood by the various names which are given to him in the word of God? To which I answer, Distinctly to point out the appearances he assumes in order that the people of God, by the clearer knowledge they have of him, may be the better prepared to detect, and to resist him. He is described as a "roaring lion, going about seeking whom he may devour." He is called Satan (an adversary or accuser), to show that, as in the case of Job, where he cannot destroy, he will accuse. He is named Lucifer (bringing light), to mark the facility with which he can transform himself into an angel of light, or to describe his once glorified state in heaven. He is called, in the Pilgrim's Progress, *Apollyon*, to inform

us, that nothing short of the eternal destruction of his victims will satisfy him.

I have thus ventured to offer a few remarks upon the nature, the employment, and the names of him, against whom we are solemnly warned in the word of God; and, should any apology be necessary for the length of them, I offer it upon the ground of that silence, which most writers maintain upon the subject of Satanic influence. I offer it also on account of the prominent station which Apollyon occupies in the work referred to. I may be permitted also to add, because that in this our day of high intellectual attainment, and freedom of discussion, a race of men have arisen, infinitely surpassing in wisdom all that have ever preceded them, and who, in compassion to our ignorance, and who, in the plenitude of that wisdom, inform us, that all we are to understand by the being referred to, is—*Eastern Metaphor!* and that, consequently, it was an eastern metaphor that, in the wilderness, tempted the Lord Jesus Christ, — that it is an eastern metaphor which, with all imaginable sedulousness, aims to accomplish the destruction of souls,—and that, under the fierce indignation of a justly offended God, an eastern metaphor will groan throughout eternity!!

The monster we have just described, presented himself before Christian with a disdainful countenance, and began to question him, as to whence he came, and whither he was going.

"I am come," was the reply, "from the City of Destruction, which is the place of all evil, and am going to the City of Zion." It is a truth, although found in the mouth of a devil, that he is both the prince and the god of the world, wherein we dwell. It is not therefore to be wondered at, that he claimed the services and person of the Pilgrim, charging him with deserting his cause, and transferring his duty to the sovereign whose kingdom he was travelling towards; offering, at the same time, to raise his wages, and to lighten his service, upon condition of his going back; and threatening him with destruction, in the event of his refusal: telling him, to the everlasting disgrace of those whose conduct he offered as an encouragement to Christian, that many who, like him, had given their services to the Lord, had, after a time, deserted that service, and had returned to Apollyon, their old master. Threats and promises, were, however, alike unavailable. Christian had tasted the sweets of liberty; he had sworn allegiance to the Lord who bought him; he had hitherto found the sufficiency of his grace and strength; and he reposed the most unshaken confidence in his word, as to the issue of every trial, especially the one which, from the temper of his adversary, he had reason to believe was inevitable. It was therefore to no purpose that the enemy set before him his former transgressions; that he reminded him of the number of those who, from their attachment to the Saviour

and his cause, had died painful and shameful deaths; that Christian had himself fainted at his first setting out; that he had fallen into errors, and had been guilty of sin, from the commencement of his journey, almost to the present time; and that, at last, swearing by his infernal den that he would destroy him upon the spot, he hurled at him a flaming dart. The combat thus commenced, Christian now discovered the value, and proved the strength of his armour. The flaming dart spent its strength upon his shield, and, ere another could be hurled at him, he drew his sword, and thus manifested his determination, in the strength of the Lord, to conquer or to die. In the course of a short time, the Pilgrim found himself wounded in his head, in one of his hands, and in one of his feet. This caused him, for a time, to give way; and his adversary, pursuing his advantage, closed with him, and, after some wrestling, gave him a fall. Christian's sword fell out of his hand, and Apollyon, exclaiming, "I am sure of thee now," threw himself upon the faithful believer, who began to give up himself for lost. It was, however, at this moment, while Apollyon was in the act of preparing to give the final blow, that Christian recovered his sword; and, with holy confidence, cried out, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy! when I fall, I shall arise." A deadly thrust at the same time caused the enemy to stagger back, which Christian perceiving, again thrust at him,

exclaiming, as the enemy received the wound, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." The conflict was over; for Apollyon spread out his wings and left the Pilgrim in possession of the field.—We are informed that the conflict lasted upwards of half a day; that, during its continuance, the yellings and rage of Apollyon were indescribable; and that the sufferings of Christian were severe. It only remains, therefore, for us now to divest the representation of its allegory, and, in plainness and simplicity, to describe its spiritual meaning.

The conflict was in the mind of Christian, and was occasioned by the temptations of the enemy to return to the world, and consequently to abandon his religious profession. Christianity is a religion which demands the sacrifice of every earthly consideration; and this not for a time, but to the close of life. The ordinary enjoyments of life must be regulated by its precepts, and be subject to its laws. While therefore the believer is here given "all things richly to enjoy," he is to enjoy them in the fear of the Lord, and to give to Him the glory of them. Now, opposed to all this, are the corrupt propensities of human nature,—the pride of the mind, and the lusts of the flesh. These are Satan's allies; and his constant efforts are directed to the stirring them up, and inducing them to assist him in his designs against the soul and against the peace of the believer, and

especially against that principle of divine grace which, as incorruptible seed, is sown in the mind. The darts which are levelled are those sensual objects, which, suited to the evil propensities of his fallen nature, are presented to them, and which I believe the grace of God alone can at all times successfully resist. I must be excused in enumerating them. Let the believer watch the operations of his mind, as, like the magnet to the pole, it is constantly turning towards them. Let him select *that* which has the most easily beset him, and which, as it was hurled like a flaming dart at him, he knelt down and prayed, "O Lord, interpose!" Let him remember that, as he rose from his knees, and thought he had now obtained the victory, he found that the temptation came again,—and again,—and again, until he cried out, "I shall one day perish!" Let the believer, I say, remember this, and he will know what Christian's fight with Apollyon meant. Let him also remember the duration of this most wretched state of soul, not for half a day, nor for a whole one, nor for a week, but perhaps for months; that it accompanied him like his shadow,—that it sat down with him to his food,—that it entered his bedchamber,—that it was before him as he knelt,—that it stopped him in the very midst of prayer,—and that, with his cheeks burning with shame, and with his eyes suffused with tears, and with his heart bursting with agony, he has smote upon his

breast, he has wrung his hands, and, with his crucified Lord in anguish, has rolled his eyes towards heaven, and cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Let the believer remember this, and he will know what Christian's fight with Apollyon meant.

It has been already said that Christian was wounded in his head, his hand, and his foot By the first may be intended his understanding; by the second, his faith; and by the latter his conversation. These wounds were, however, of little importance; a few of the leaves of the tree of life soon healed them. It should also be remembered, that the only weapons with which the adversary fought, were darts; and that, consequently, the exposed parts of the Pilgrim's person were liable to injury. This part of the subject will also be well understood by those, who, although eventually conquerors, have purchased their victory at the expense of their wounds, the scars of which still remain. During the fierceness of such a conflict as has been described, the believer is sometimes tempted to ask, Shall I not, by a partial yielding, ultimately secure a conquest? I am sorely beset; I am harassed in my duties, and disturbed in my privileges; a trifling compliance will spare me the pain of future assaults. The experiment has been tried, but never with success. The claims of sin are like those of the grave, and its language is, Give! Give! Give! It is like a serpent; danger is

increased by the nearness of our approach; and our safety depends upon the interposition of our faith. What, I would ask, has any one ever obtained by yielding to temptation? "The Lord pardon thy servant in this thing,—it is but a small matter." But that small matter is a spark; and the peace of the soul, and the enjoyment of God, and the recollection of past integrity, and the present usefulness of life, may, for a time, be all consumed by it! We may fly, as Joseph fled; we may pray, as Paul prayed; or fight, as Christian fought;—we may do these things and succeed; but we cannot yield, without dishonouring God's most holy cause, nor without bringing distress into our own souls. Be solemnly assured that the first effort at resistance will prove the most successful, and every subsequent one increasingly easy, until the enemy, despairing of accomplishing his purpose by slow and almost imperceptible means, will at once discover his desperate malice; and, though collecting all his infernal energies, will at once leave you the glory and the blessedness of conquest.

I am unwilling to quit this part of the subject, without offering a few words of advice to those who are still under the enemy's feet. You have yielded to the temptations of the destroyer, and have become the slaves of iniquity. In bondage more galling than that in which Pharaoh held the people of Israel, the faculties of your souls, and the members of your bodies,

are retained, and, from the depths of your wretchedness you sometimes exclaim, "From the belly of hell we cry out; the waters have encompassed our souls; the depths have enclosed us; the weeds are wrapped round our heads!"—True; but there is still hope; and the power, and the mercy, displayed in Jonah's salvation, may yet be displayed in yours. The arm of God is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor has his ear grown heavy, that it cannot hear. There is as much mercy for repentant, returning backsliders, as for any other class of sinners; and God, who knows the proneness of man to depart from him, has not only provided for his return, but has left upon record the strongest assurance of his willingness to receive; nay, more—he has given it in special charge to his ministers, to invite them: "Go, proclaim these words, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever." You, perhaps, will ask, What must we do to be saved? I answer, Kneel before God, and acknowledge the past. You have deserved his sorest displeasure; you have been spared notwithstanding your multiplied and aggravated transgressions; you have been stumbling-blocks in the way of many, who, by your example, have been hardened in sin, and, for any thing you know to the contrary, are now lifting up their eyes in

everlasting perdition; you have grieved the souls of the people of God, and furnished his enemies with occasions to blaspheme;—can you do less than acknowledge these things? For all that is past, God requires nothing more than the confession of sin, and the supplication of forgiveness, through the blood of a crucified Saviour. For all that is to come, his grace is sufficient. It can eradicate the most evil habits; it can break the dominion of the most powerful sin; and strengthen against all the fraud and force of the enemy. Be entreated, then, to make one more effort to recover that liberty so dearly purchased with the blood of the cross, and so highly prized by those who have tasted its sweetness. Leave the guilt of your past life with him who has promised to remove it; and, from the moment of rising from your knees, commence that life upon which you can ask the blessing of God, and which leads to everlasting salvation.

LECTURE VIII.

The Valley of the Shadow of Death.

It is of importance to society, that the rise and progress, the ravages and disappearance of an epidemic disease, should be attentively considered, and the account of it carefully preserved, in order that succeeding generations may be

led to adopt such measures as, in their wisdom, may be deemed expedient to guard against the consequences of a similar visitation. Persecution, as a scourge, has often been permitted to visit the church of Christ; and, however its name has varied, its consequences have been the same. It is true that, in our country, Pagan cruelty has no existence; and, whatever may be its spirit, Papal persecution dare not, at present, exert its power. But, as the curse of both has been felt, it is proper to record their appearances, that we may be guarded against them.

The days in which John Bunyan lived were characterized by that spirit of intolerance which is so inimical to the cause of God, and so destructive to its professors. Twelve years' imprisonment, without the commission of a crime, may be spoken of lightly, when viewed at a distance, by those who never endured confinement; while, to the sufferer, they must have been productive of much anxiety, and have been the cause of much distress. It is not therefore to be wondered at, that the author of the Pilgrim's Progress should be led to reflect upon the state of the church in his own times, as well as during those which preceded them, and that these reflections should constitute a considerable part of the instructive allegory which has given rise to these Lectures. I refer particularly to the Valley of the Shadow of Death, which Christian is now about entering.

We are informed that, after the conflict already described, Christian acknowledged with gratitude the grace and strength which the Lord had been pleased to impart during its continuance; and that, by an application of some leaves of the tree of life, his wounds were immediately healed. Upon the spot where he conquered, he then sat down, and partook of the refreshment provided for him by the friends residing at the palace. Finding himself refreshed, he once more prepared for his journey, with his sword drawn, not knowing but that he might yet meet with enemies. He however reached in safety the end of the Valley of Humiliation.

The Valley of the Shadow of Death, referred to by David, in the twenty-first Psalm, is supposed to have received its name from the following circumstance: It was situated near a river, whither it was the custom of the shepherds to bring their flocks to water. On each side of it, rose two ranges of hills, the resort of many beasts of prey; some of whom were constantly on the watch, and ready to spring upon any of the sheep which might wander from the flock. Notwithstanding the precaution of the shepherds, the number of the sheep which were thus destroyed was so considerable, that the shepherds distinguished this passage to the river from all others, by the name of *The Valley of the Shadow of Death*. Jeremiah's description of the wilderness will apply to it: "*A*

land of deserts and of pits, a land of drought and of the shadow of death, a land that no man passed through" (save him who is travelling to heaven), "and where no man dwelt." That Bunyan, by this term, and by the account he afterward gives, refers to the dangers which believers were exposed to from the civil and ecclesiastical tyranny under which they groaned, will soon be made apparent; that he also refers to those seasons of darkness and distress through which the children of God sometimes pass, will, to some readers, appear equally clear; to both of which may be added, the apprehensions of many fearful Christians, as often as they reflect upon the pains, and the groans, of a dying bed.

Ere, however, Christian entered it, he was met by two men, who, as they ran, were asked by him whither they were going. "Back! back!" was the reply; "and we would have you do so too, if either life or peace be prized by you. We were going the way that you are, until we saw the Valley itself, as dark as pitch, and heard a continual yelling and howling, as of people in unutterable misery, who there sat bound in affliction and irons. Over the Valley we also saw hanging the discouraging clouds of confusion; while Death itself, spreading his wings over it, makes it a place every way dreadful, being utterly without order."

Such was the account which these two men, like the spies of old, gave of the Valley. But,

however formidable its dangers might be in their eyes, Christian, knowing that his way to the Celestial City lay through it, expressed his determination to go forward. They separated; and Christian, with his sword still in his hand, prepared to brave its dangers, and to clear his way through it.

As Christian moved forward, he discovered, by the light at the commencement of the Valley, an exceedingly narrow path, on the right hand side of which was a *Deep Ditch*, into which the blind have led the blind in all ages of the world. On the left hand side was a very dangerous *Quag*, into which a good man falling, finds no bottom for his feet to stand on. David once fell into it, and cried, "Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink; let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters."

The ditch was *Dead Formality*, into which the blind guides of Bunyan's days led those who would follow them. They were a race of men who undertook to teach others the truths of which they themselves were ignorant; and to lead them to heaven, while they themselves were utter strangers to the way! The performance of unmeaning ceremonies, and their subscriptions to unmeaning articles, constituted the Ditch, by the side of which Christian, with caution, had to tread.

The quag referred to the persecuting spirit of the times in which the author lived, and from

which neither sincerity of intention, nor holiness of life, could save those whom the enemies of the church of Christ selected as their victims. Harassing and vexatious informations, fines, and imprisonments, made up the quag, between which and the Ditch of Formality ran the path upon which Christian was now walking in the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The distress was increased by that ignorance of their informers, and of the construction which might be put upon the laws against which the persecuted offended, represented by the darkness of the valley. Thus, if Christian, by a solemn determination to avoid falling into the unscriptural conformity of the times, kept from the side of the path on which the ditch lay, he was in danger of falling into the quag; while an attempt to avoid the evils of persecution, so far as conscience would permit, exposed him to the charge, and to the danger, of formality. Into this quag, *two thousand* holy ministers were thrown, by an Act of Parliament, which they were commanded to yield obedience to before many of them could obtain knowledge of it!! It was passed during the confinement of John Bunyan; and I shall be forgiven if, for the sake of illustration, I read the account of this memorable transaction, as recorded in Bogue and Bennet's History of the Dissenters.

"On St. Bartholomew's day, August the twenty-fourth, in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-two, the Act of Uniformity

expelled from the establishment all ministers who would not swear *their unfeigned* assent and consent to every thing in the Book of Common Prayer. In many parts of the kingdom, the ministers could not procure the book before the time within which the law required them to swear to it, or resign their livings; so that, in their farewell sermons, they told their flocks, that they were obliged to leave them for not swearing to a book which they had not been able to see. But this was no obstacle to the ruling party, who wished for the most costly sacrifices at the shrine of absolute obedience; and longed to rid themselves of men who were troubled with a conscience.

"Two thousand ministers resigned their livings in the establishment, and exposed themselves to the loss of all things, rather than submit to these new terms of conformity, which their consciences condemned. Bartholomew-day was chosen, because they would thus be deprived of their year's income, which would be due shortly after. No portion of their former livings was reserved to keep them from starving; for these persecutors were not ashamed to be outdone by their enemies. The great Mr. Locke styles these two thousand ejected ministers, learned, pious, orthodox divines; and, we have no hesitation in saying, that of them the world was not worthy."

After some other observations, the writers go on to say: "To add iniquity to iniquity, the

Conventicle Act was passed, decreeing that, if any person, above the age of sixteen years, be present at any meeting for worship different from the Church of England, where there shall be five persons more than the household, they shall, for the first offence, suffer three months' imprisonment, or pay five pounds; for the second, the punishment is doubled; and for the third, they shall be banished to America, or pay a hundred pounds; and, if they return from banishment, suffer death. The oath of an informer was sufficient to inflict all the severity of this statute of Draco. While many of the best men filled our jails, the vilest of the human race rioted in debauchery, by informing for the sake of the reward."

I do not consider that, by these references, I am giving pain or offence to those ministers, or members of the establishment, who regard every species of persecution as incompatible with the mild and mercy-breathing spirit of the Gospel; nor are they any more to be identified with them, than they are with any other acts of persecution, against which they would be the first to raise their hands, and oppose their influence.

Returning to Christian, we discover that he has entered the Valley, exceedingly distressed by its darkness and dangers. He, however, went forward, until, having reached the middle of it, he perceived the mouth of hell, standing by the way-side. From it the flame and smoke

burst forth, accompanied by sparks and dreadful noises, so that Christian was compelled to put up his sword, and betake himself to another weapon, which we have described as *All Prayer*, crying, "O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul!" He went forward as he prayed, although the flames seemed to pursue him. The noises increased, accompanied by rushings to and fro, until he thought he should be torn in pieces, or trodden down like mire in the streets. This was his condition for a considerable time, during which he was pressing forward, with his hands and his heart directed towards God in prayer. His distress increased, as he imagined that he heard a company of fiends coming forward to meet him. He was compelled at length to stop, and reflect upon what he had best do. At one time, he thought he had better go back; but he remembered the difficulties he had surmounted, and the dangers he had braved. It also occurred to him, that he might, by this time, be half-way through the Valley, and that the danger of returning might be greater than in proceeding. He resolved therefore to go forward, although the farther he went, the nearer the fiends seemed to approach, until, when they had almost reached him, he cried out, "I will walk in the strength of the Lord God!" He had no sooner thus said, than they instantly gave back, and he was threatened no longer.

Of one thing Bunyan takes particular notice,

namely, that, under the influence of his fears, the Pilgrim could not discern his own voice from those with which he was assailed; and especially that, just as he came to the mouth of the burning pit, a *Wicked One* got behind him, and, stepping softly up, whispered in his ears the most horrid blasphemies, which Christian thought were the suggestions of his own mind. His distress was great, as he thought how wicked it was, that he, who had received so many mercies from God, should now blaspheme his worthy and holy name. He, however, knew that such conduct was most abhorrent to his nature. Had he thought of stopping his ears, or had he known that they were not the suggestions of his own mind, he would not have suffered as he did. Having walked in this disconsolate condition for some time, he thought he heard the voice of a man before him, saying, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." His sufferings were forgotten, as he heard the sound; for he thought that some one, who feared God, was in this valley as well as himself. He concluded, at the same time, that God was with him: "Why not then," he thought, "with me also?" He likewise hoped that, could he overtake him, whoever it might be, he should have company, at least during part of the remainder of his journey. Thus encouraged, he went forward, calling to him that was before, who, although he heard, knew not what to answer, as

imagining himself also to be alone. The day at length broke, and Christian said, "He hath turned the shadow of death into morning!"

It will here be necessary to go back, for the purpose of looking at the design and application of what has been now delivered.

The farther we have gone in the Valley, the stronger has become the proof, that the author designed by it, among other things, to describe the dangers of a Christian Pilgrimage, arising out of the persecutions of the times in which he lived. What is the first impression made on the mind, by his description of the voices, the fiends, and the mouth of hell,—by the rushings to and fro, which caused him to fear that he should be torn in pieces, or trodden down like mire in the streets? Connect with these his description of the Quag and the Ditch, and we shall be compelled to answer, he referred to the sufferings and dangers of Christian professors. From this post of observation, let us survey them, and we shall draw the following conclusions:—The mouth of hell was that burning spirit of persecution, which consumed the bodies of the noble army of martyrs, which our establishment, in its Liturgy, celebrates as praising God: "The noble army of martyrs praise thee." The flames proceeded from the mouth of hell, to show the nature and origin of the spirit referred to. They pursued Christian, but they were not able to overtake him. Thanks alone to the goodness of that God, who had

caused their fury to abate! Ten thousand thanks to Him, that its fury has exhausted its strength, and that the traces of it in Britain are only to be found amidst the ruins of a spirit of bigotry, which, like smoke, sometimes may be seen rising, and enveloping the edifices which Christian benevolence has reared, without daring to enter them! I refer to the various attacks which have been made upon our Bible, Missionary, and School Societies; but which have no more affected their stability, nor impaired their beauty, than the smoke, issuing from a mud-built cottage, has broken down the walls, or marred the beauties, of a palace, to which it may have been contiguous. Nor could a fitter appellation than *Fiends* be found for those men who fattened upon the miseries of the suffering church of Christ, who laid informations against its members, and who received, as their hire and reward, a part of the fines imposed upon them. What must have been the state of society in general, and of the church of God in particular, when men of the most abandoned character,—men whom society had cast out of its mouth,—men who found music in the groans, and nectar in the tears, of *those* whose hands were uplifted in prayer, and whose bitterest wish was for their eternal happiness? Yet these were the very men in whom a corrupt government, and a wicked and profligate court, found the ready instruments of their vengeance! David Hume was never justly charged with partiality

for the suffering people of God, nor has he ever been accused of advocating their cause; he is however compelled to admit, that unheard-of atrocities were perpetrated during the period we are now speaking of, and that the Dissenters were often made the subjects of them. Speaking of the entrance of Colonel Kirk into Bridgewater, after Monmouth's defeat, he says, "At his first entrance, he hanged nineteen prisoners without the least inquiry into the merits of their cause. As if to make sport with death, he ordered a certain number to be executed, while he and his company should drink the king's health, or the queen's, or that of Chief Justice Jefferies. Observing their feet to quiver in the agonies of death, he cried, that he would give them music to their dancing; and he immediately commanded the drums to beat, and the trumpets to sound. All the inhabitants of the country, *innocent* as well as guilty, were exposed to the ravages of this barbarian. The soldiery were let loose to live at free quarters; and his own regiment, instructed by his example and encouraged by his exhortations, distinguished themselves in a particular manner by their outrages. By way of pleasantry, he used to call them his *lambs!* an appellation which was long remembered with horror in the west of England."

He was succeeded by Judge Jefferies, whose name is below common infamy, and whose memory hangs gibbeted on the page of history.

Was he, I ask, less than a fiend, who, at the close of his Western Circuit, hung up the quarters of several hundred persons within the circumference of fifty or sixty miles—who converted the realm into a slaughter-house, and who, by the appointment of James the Second, was constituted grand butcher?* The mind turns with sickening disgust from the contemplation of atrocities such as these, and dwells with delight upon the era in which we live. It contemplates a pious and venerable monarch living in the affections of his people, over whom, for sixty years, he swayed a sceptre unstained with cruelty, and unsullied with crime: it rests upon his faded form, and upon his sightless eyes; it listens to the wanderings of his mind,

* Hume says, "Of all the executions during this dismal period, the most remarkable were those of Mrs. Gaunt, and Lady Lisle, who had been accused of harbouring traitors. Mrs. Gaunt was an Anabaptist, noted for her beneficence, which she extended to persons of all professions and persuasions. One of the rebels, knowing her humane disposition, had recourse to her in his distress, and was concealed by her. Hearing of the proclamation which offered an indemnity and rewards to such as discovered criminals, he betrayed his benefactress, and bore evidence against her. He received a pardon, as a recompence for his treachery, and she was burnt alive for her charity!"

and views him sinking to his grave, with the blended emotions of pity and love. With unfeigned satisfaction, it hears his illustrious successor declare his solemn and fixed determination, to tread in the steps of a father thus blessed in his life, and thus honoured in his death.

The author of the Pilgrim's Progress has particularly noticed the conduct of a Fiend, who, getting behind the Pilgrim, whispered blasphemies in his ear, between which, and his own thoughts, he could not discern the difference. What are we to understand by this? If permitted to carry the construction I have adopted to the close of the Valley, I would answer, The nefarious arts which were used to induce the sufferers for Christ to recant, that their example might influence others to the same line of conduct; failing in which, recantations were forged, and offered as inducements to others to sacrifice their consciences upon the altar of conformity, and thus to gratify the vanity, and pamper the ambition, of their foes. "Now you see he has returned to his reason, and has found the arms of our holy mother extended to receive him. Are you wiser than he? Look at the sentiments contained in this paper. They would be yours, but for the delusion you labour under. Jailer, set open the door! There, you are at liberty now to go; only, as you pass, sign this declaration, which merely contains your submission to the authority of God, your Sovereign, and the church." While many saw

the snare that was thus laid for them, and were enabled to avoid it, many others were held in a state of suspense, uncertain of the path they were required to tread; some few fell into it, who proved, by the patience with which they endured subsequent sufferings, the depth of that repentance they were made to experience.

The *voices*, and the *rushings to and fro*, well describe the threats employed to intimidate the followers of the Saviour, and which caused them to fear that they should soon be torn to pieces, as by beasts of prey, or be trodden down like mire in the streets. They knew not how soon some iniquitous act of their enemies might affect their lives, as it now affected their liberties and their property. The writers of the history already referred to, speaking of the unsettled state of the times, say, "Their prospects were exceedingly gloomy. The state of the Dissenters was singular. Whether they were to have a continued existence, seemed doubtful. They were placed in a new situation. The wisest could not divine what was to come to pass. Time alone could reveal the mystery." Their enemies, however divided amongst themselves, were united against them; they were preached at from the pulpit, and written against from the press; their names were held up to derision and scorn, their property was confiscated, and their persons imprisoned. Who that calculates upon the misery thus inflicted upon men, whose crime was a profession of the gospel,

can wonder that Bunyan, himself a prisoner, should hand down to posterity a record of these transactions, and with it a description of the manner in which the believer passed through them;—nothing short of the strength of the Lord God enabled them to reach the end of the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

It will be remembered that, when we left Christian, in order that we might examine the way that he had come, we were informed that the day had broke. We are now told that it was morning, and that Christian, looking back, was appalled at the sight of the dangers to which he had been exposed. He was, however, in a state of comparative security; for as the light increased, the annoyances which had distressed him retired, although they were discovered to him, according to that which is written: "He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth to light the shadow of death."

Throughout the whole of this most painful part of his pilgrimage, Christian's only weapon was *All Prayer!* Whether pursued by the flames, or haunted by a fiend; whether alarmed at the voices, or terrified at the idea of being trodden down; *this* was at once his consolation and dependance. His example is worthy of our closest imitation. *All Prayer* is a weapon, the edge of which has never turned in the day of battle; neither can it be wrested out of our hands, Paul and Silas used it when their feet were made fast in the stocks; and with it our Lord

conquered, although his hands were nailed to the cross. When Peter was in prison, *prayer* was made for him by the church, without ceasing, and it prevailed. When Daniel knew that the decree was signed, he *prayed*, and God sent his angels to shut the mouths of the lions. When for three years the heavens were shut up, Elijah *prayed;* they were then opened, and God answered by fruitful showers. When, upon the bed of death, heart and flesh were failing, the lips of the dying saint have moved in prayer, thus showing that death itself cannot cut off his intercourse with God.

If the rising of the sun revealed to Christian the dangers which he had hitherto been preserved from, and, as a consequence, excited the grateful feelings of his soul, it also showed the snares and difficulties which surrounded the path he had to tread; and he saw that the second part of the Valley was, if possible, more dangerous than that through which he had already come. From the place where he now stood, to the end of the Valley, the way was all along set full of snares, traps, and gins; while pits, pitfalls, deep holes, and shelvings down, were so numerous that, had the darkness continued to this place, and had he possessed a thousand lives, they must all have been lost! But, as the light shone upon his path, he was enabled to say, "His candle shineth upon my head, and by his light I go through darkness."

In the light already mentioned, and which

we shall shortly explain, Christian reached the end of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and with surprise saw the blood, bones, ashes, and mangled bodies of pilgrims, who had passed through it in former days, but who upon this spot had perished. While surprise held the Pilgrim to the contemplation of this sight, and while the Dreamer, for a time, was unable to account for their appearance, looking a little farther, they saw a cave, wherein two giants, of the name of *Pope* and *Pagan*, formerly resided; and, through whose power and tyranny, the men whose mangled limbs lay before them, were put to death. Christian passed this place without much danger, Pagan having been dead for many years; and Pope, although still living, yet by reason of the infirmities of age, and the number of conflicts he had been obliged to sustain, had grown stiff in his joints, and could do little more than sit and gnash his teeth at the pilgrims as they passed, and bite his nails for madness, that he could neither reach them, nor prevent their going forward. To Christian, as he passed, he addressed himself, saying, "You will never mend until more of you be burned." Christian was too wise to reply; his time also was too valuable to lose in fruitless altercation; he therefore passed on, and received no hurt.

We have thus seen Christian through the Valley of the Shadow of Death; and, were additional proof wanted to show that the design of

the author by it was to describe the state to which genuine believers in the Lord Jesus Christ were reduced, we shall find it in the testimony of the surviving giant; we shall find it in the mangled remains of former pilgrims; as well as in the declaration of the author himself, that to the tyranny of the giants they owed their deaths. Nothing of this part of the allegory can apply to the religious experience of believers; it appears exclusively to belong to the class of events already referred to. It will therefore at once be seen, that the day-break, the rising of the sun, and the morning, were intended to describe that light, which has broke upon our land, and which is dawning upon the once dark corners of the earth. The light I allude to is *Civil and Religious Liberty*, together with that mental illumination which forbids a continuance of the bondage under which the human mind lays while in a state of ignorance,—which leaves a man to judge for himself, as to the worship and service he owes to God, and the obligations under which he is laid to live in peace with his fellow-men.

I am aware that a feeling of disappointment has accompanied me throughout the whole of this Lecture, and which has proceeded from the view I have taken of the design of the allegory, and which may be expressed by this supposition: "I always thought the Valley of the Shadow of Death referred to the Religious Experience of believers, while the subjects of those

fears which are incidental to death." I am willing to admit, that to a certain extent this view of it may be taken. A Christian, under sickness of body, or darkness and distress of soul, may be annoyed by gloomy apprehensions, which, like fiends, may haunt his imagination, and suggest blasphemous thoughts. He may fear lest he should be left to fall into the ditch of formality; he may be driven, by the persecutions of his spiritual foes, to conclude that he has become obnoxious to the anger of God; and he may imagine that his gloom and distress is but part of the reward due to his sins. This view of the subject may be carried on to the end of the Valley, and the light may be thought to signify the comfort obtained while passing through it; but we must remove the cave, we must stop the mouth of the giant, and clear away the remains of the slaughtered pilgrims, before we can make the analogy obvious throughout.

It would argue a want of gratitude to God, were we to close this Lecture without adverting to our privileges, and contrasting them with the afflictions of Bunyan's days. We live in the days foretold by Micah, when he said, "They shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it." The strong arm of the law, which formerly crushed our places for religious worship, is now stretched out for their defence.

We can preach, and hear the truths connected with our everlasting peace, without the fear of informers, or the terror of fines, imprisonment, and death. Nor are these blessings enjoyed without producing corresponding effects upon society; and I am mistaken if the government under which we live is not aware of them. I should be sorry to make comparisons unfriendly to any particular parts of the country; but I may be permitted to ask, To what is it owing, that the *Principality* has remained uncontaminated with the infidelity of the times?—and why it is, that a military force is neither required to suppress disturbance, nor to awe the people of Wales into submission? I answer without the fear of contradiction, That it is owing to the general diffusion of religious knowledge, to the indefatigable exertions of pious Churchmen (ministers and people), uniting their energies with those of Dissenters of every denomination, in circulating the Scriptures, and training up, in the fear of God, the rising generation.

It may be asked, Why then have you drawn the dark and melancholy transactions of former days into greater notice than they were before the delivery and the publication of your Lectures? Because I could not give the Author's meaning without doing it; because I think that our children should know the price which their forefathers laid down for the mercies they enjoy, and be told that their blood should be shed in the same manner, rather than give up

those mercies. I have also brought those transactions into view, that bigotry and tyranny may learn, that in heaven there is a God, who has heard the cries, and avenged the blood of his saints, upon many of their destroyers.

LECTURE IX.

Christian overtakes Faithful—The Circumstances under which he was induced to commence his Pilgrimage—Difficulties through which he passed, previous to Christian's overtaking him.

CHRISTIAN has hitherto travelled alone, notwithstanding the number of persons he met with on his journey, many of whom professed to be "pilgrims and strangers" with himself, but all of whom he left behind. We have already said that, when near the end of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, he heard some one before him; and that he consoled himself with the thought, that he should now have company the rest of his journey. Accordingly, having reached a rising ground, purposely thrown up that pilgrims might see the way which lay before them, he saw, at a distance, Faithful, to whom he called, wishing to be his companion; but who replied, after looking back, "No, I am upon my life, and the avenger of blood is behind me." A sort of race commenced, in which Christian outstripped Faithful; but who,

while enjoying his triumph tumbled and fell; nor was he able to rise, until Faithful came and helped him up!

We are now to regard the pilgrims as fellow-travellers, of similar habits and feelings, the subjects of the same hopes and fears, mutually concerned for each other's welfare, and equally anxious to promote it. From the experience and conduct of Faithful we shall learn the uniformity of that grace which the children of God are partakers of; and with which we are made acquainted through the medium of the conversation which passes between them.

It seems that Christian's departure from the City of Destruction made a powerful inpression upon the mind of Faithful, who determined, if possible, to accompany him, but who failed, in consequence of Christian's leaving before him. It will be recollected, that he passed by during the time that Christian remained at the Palace, and that, upon inquiry, he found that he was formerly a resident in the city which Christian had left. We shall perceive, as we go on, that Faithful's trials and temptations proceeded from causes differing from those with which Christian had been exercised, although their object was the same; namely, to draw off his mind from his intended pilgrimage. His quitting the City of Destruction (the world) was hastened by the rumour, which was increasing, that the City would be devoted to the flames, and, in a short time, be consumed;

and, however some might credit the report, there were many who disregarded it, and who spoke with derision, and treated with contempt, Christian's desperate journey. Faithful believed it, and in time made his escape from it. Pliable's condition among his townsmen was similar to that in which many an apostate professor finds himself, who, discouraged with the trials of the way, returns to the world; and who bears the reproach of some for ever making that profession, and the contempt of others for afterward abandoning it: while shame covers him, as often as he meets the people of God, conscious of his guilt, and of his cowardice, while it not unfrequently happens, that he endeavours to purchase his former rank in society by the desperate lengths in sin to which he goes, as if the tempter was only to be propitiated by the sacrifice of every remaining principle of gratitude to God, and the surrender of every fear, under the influence of which his profession was made. The last state of such men is worse than the first; and painful as the truth may be, it ought not to be withheld, that some of the most abandoned characters have been found amongst these apostates.

Leaving them to the mercies of God, who alone can save them, we find that the first attack upon Faithful was made by *Wanton*, who offered him the indulgence of sensuality, as the price of his Christian profession. I mistake if

this be not one of the most successful engines which the adversary employs against the peace and the happiness of believers; and, however few may be the cases wherein he succeeds, yet none can tell the distress of soul, which temptations thus create, but those who are harassed by them.

Faithful had scarcely been delivered out of the hands of his last enemy, when, at the foot of the Hill Difficulty, he was met by a man of most imposing appearance. He was aged; and, after congratulating the Pilgrim upon the honesty of his appearance, offered him considerable wages, upon condition of his entering into his service. He told him that his work should be the enjoyment of this world's pleasures; that his table was furnished with this world's dainties; that he had three daughters, the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life,—one of whom he would give him in marriage; and finally, that he would make him his heir, and that he should enjoy these delights as long as he continued in this world. The name of the aged man was *Adam the First,* and he dwelt in the Town of Deceit. It was not therefore to be wondered at, that when Faithful saw written upon his forehead, "Put off the old man with his deeds," and reflected upon his design, which was to enslave him the moment he entered into his service, should say to him, "Begone." In reply, however, he was threatened; and finally, in separating, Adam the

First gave him a *deadly twitch*, in order to pull him back, which made the Pilgrim think that a part of him was taken away, and which caused him to cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" Having prevailed, Faithful went up the hill.

This is purely allegorical, and is intended to describe the opposition made by corrupt nature to the giving up of worldly ease and enjoyment for the privations and difficulties inseparable from genuine Christianity. It shows, at the same time, that, however nature may oppose, grace will finally prevail. Had man never fallen, the affections of his soul, and the inclinations of his nature, would have remained in subserviency to the dictates of reason; reason itself would have remained under the control of love to God, and all would have been obedience to his command. Sin has inverted this order, and given to our corrupt inclinations the place which should have been occupied by reason and the love of God. Now, as one design of the Gospel is, to break the power of sin, and to place every faculty of the soul, and every desire of the mind, at the absolute disposal of God, in order that they may promote his glory; and as this is the very work of grace, so often mentioned in Scripture, it is not to be wondered at, that Adam the First should rise up, and, by every possible argument, endeavour to prevent the accomplishment of it;—that he should contend for the ease and enjoyment of the flesh, and suggest that a profession of the Gospel

may be made in accordance with them;—that worldly considerations should be weighed, and urged against those privations which the Gospel requires;—and that, like the seat of war, the breast of him who is the subject of these conflicting principles should be a scene of anarchy and confusion. It is a conflict, however, which cannot long be continued. If grace be in the soul, it must prevail; and, whatever sufferings it may inflict, will eventually reign through righteousness unto eternal life. This appears to have been the case with Faithful. The pleadings of former habits, and the promises of future enjoyments, for a time confounded him. He was half inclined to yield to them; but he detected their purpose, and saw that it was his present slavery, and future destruction. Hence he heard in every pleading, and saw in every prospect, of sinful enjoyment, the solemn admonition: "Put off the old man with his deeds." The strife was over, and this his enemy fell to the ground; but, like a beast of prey subdued, yet not destroyed, he inflicted that wound which made him imagine that a part of himself was torn away, and caused him to cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" To apply this to individual experience,—with some it is the reluctance with which they separate from their sinful companions; with others, it is the giving up of favourite but forbidden amusements; with a third description of men, it is the struggle they undergo with sinful pro-

pensities; while, with a fourth class of persons, it is the voluntary abandonment of all future expectations of wealth, or fame, or indulgence, from every source that is not connected with the blessing of God.

Released from the importunities we have noticed, Faithful began to ascend the Hill Difficulty; but, looking behind him, he saw one coming, swift as the wind; who, having overtaken him, gave him a blow which brought him to the ground. He had not even time to express his surprise at this treatment; for, before he was aware of it, he was laid as one dead. When a little restored, he asked the reason of this severity, and was informed that it was for his secretly inclining to Adam the First. Another blow accompanied this answer; and others followed in such rapid succession that Faithful had scarcely strength left to cry for mercy. At the mention of mercy, the assailant replied, "I know not how to show it;" and renewed his violence, until life was nearly gone. It was at this moment that the Saviour came, and bade him forbear. His command was obeyed, and the punishment ceased.

The severity of the law represented by Moses, its administrator, is intended; and it becomes us to bear in mind, that this severity was not exercised for any breach of the law by actual transgression, but for the secret inclinations of the heart. So extensive are its requirements, and so unbending is its severity, that

the secret thoughts of the heart are subject to its judgment: "Whoso hateth his brother without a cause, is a murderer?" By what law? By that law which regards the intent, and judges of actions by the motives which produce them;—by that law which makes no allowance for human infirmities, nor admits of any apology when sin is committed;—which has provided no Saviour, and which never admits of arrest of judgment, or compromise of punishment; but which declares its awful threatening in that curse, under which the finally impenitent must groan throughout eternity,—under which every man lies, while "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity,"—and from which the sovereign mercy of God in Christ Jesus alone can deliver him: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to *do* them." It is to this that the apostle Paul refers, when he says, "Now we know, that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that *every* mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

To this also James refers, when he says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, shall be guilty of all." How strangely infatuated, then, must those be, who place their hopes of salvation upon their

obedience to the law,—who draw consolation from the goodness of their hearts,—and who hope to merit heaven by the morality of their lives! If these can save, then the Saviour need not have groaned, and bled, and died. If their own righteousness will give a title to heaven, then they do not want the righteousness of another. But then the word of God must be shaken, which says, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

We here learn that Faithful's first serious impressions were made by the application of this law, described as a visit from Moses, threatening to burn the house wherein he dwelt, unless he quitted it; that to this was added the rumour of threatened judgments, which hung over the City of Destruction; that, in this state of mind, he heard of Christian's departure, and shortly after determined to follow him. He got safely over the Slough of Despond, and was admitted through the Wicket Gate. The lions were asleep as he passed them; and, having a considerable part of the day before him, and having found the Hill less difficult than Christian did, he declined entering the Palace Beautiful. He appears to have reached the bottom of the Hill with as little difficulty and danger as he reached the top; but, when entering the Valley of Humiliation, he was met by *Discontent*, who endeavoured to turn him back. To effect this

purpose, Discontent said that the Valley was a dishonourable place, and that a continuance in it, for any time, would disoblige all his friends, particularly *Pride*, *Arrogance*, *Self-conceit*, and *Worldly Glory*. Faithful, however, was not to be moved from his purpose; and he answered that however nearly related these persons were to him, yet as they had disowned him, in consequence of his embracing a pilgrim's life, he felt himself under no obligation now to consult them; and for the dishonour which might attach to him for being found where he was, he thought that the Valley itself had been much misrepresented, the Scriptures declaring "that before honour is humility," that "a haughty spirit is before a fall;" and, to close his answer, he declared, that he had rather pass through it to the blessedness set before him, than remain satisfied with that which is so highly esteemed by the world. These considerations prevailed; and Discontent left him. He has, however, too often found others willing to receive him; and miserable indeed is the breast, the family, the church, or the state wherein he resides.

Let us begin with the first. Of all beings the discontented person is the most unhappy. If the habitation of discontent be a female breast, and that female not in the higher walks of society, her appearance is not so genteel as that of her neighbours, or her furniture is not so good. Her table is not so well spread; and consequently

her vanity not so often gratified as, but for these things, it might be. But she forgets how many poor females want bread to eat, and a bed to lie down upon. She forgets, too, that, by this very discontent, she proves her unworthiness of the mercies already conferred upon her. Did she but for a moment consider, that by transgression she has forfeited every blessing she possesses, and that God has not dealt with her according to her sins, nor rewarded her according to her iniquities, it would subdue the risings of discontent,—it would humble her in the very dust of self-debasement, and cause her, with gratitude, to adore that God, whose mercies are new every moment, and because of which she is spared, notwithstanding her unworthiness.

Nor is he less blamable, who, with an envious and jealous eye, regards the superior comforts of those whom God, in his wise and holy providence, has placed above him; and in the possession of which he would himself rejoice, however obtained. From the operation of this baneful principle, have proceeded wars and murder. Under its influence Haman plotted the destruction of the Jews, and received his reward upon the gibbet he had prepared for Mordecai. Where indulged by those who profess Christianity it disturbs the repose of their families, it converts the church into a scene of contention, and sets the subjects of it, like Diotrephes of old, to contend for pre-eminence. How

contrary to the example, and how opposite to the precept of *Him*, who said, "He that is the greatest among you shall be your servant!" Discontent has been the train which wicked and designing men have laid against the peace and welfare of kingdoms, and which, being fired, has burst asunder all the obligations which have bound man to man, and has made breaches, through which have entered famine, civil war, and murder. May the Lord keep each of us from the curse of discontent! and, by directing our eyes to the consideration of our mercies, show us how infinitely superior is the man who possesses a thankful, grateful heart, to him who, dissatisfied with his lot, consumes his time, and destroys his peace, with bitter unavailing regrets.

The enemy, however, who the most alarmed Faithful, and who had well nigh succeeded in turning him back, was *Shame*. His importunities, for a time, were incessant; he seemed determined to prevent Faithful's pilgrimage; so that he began at length to fear that he must yield.

Shame, in the first place, objected to religion itself, as being pitiful and low, and utterly unworthy a man of spirit. It would also produce tenderness of conscience, a most unmanly thing; and, by teaching him the importance of guarding his words and actions, would expose him to the ridicule of those brave spirits who despised such caution. Another argument used by Shame was, the low estimation in

which religion was held by the mighty and the wise of this world; and that, consequently, there was something extremely base and ignoble in the life of a pilgrim; urging also how ignorant many Christians were of those arts and sciences of which the natural mind is so proud. To complete the list of these objections, Shame also pointed out, how degrading it was to sit whining and groaning under a sermon, to ask forgiveness for injuries, and to make restitution where it might be practicable; how exceedingly it let a man down in the estimation of the great, from whom religion must separate the pilgrim, because of their vices, and induce him to associate with the poor, because of their virtues. Such were the objections which Shame urged against a pilgrim's life. It is not therefore to be wondered at that Faithful, for a time, was tempted to give up his purpose, and that it was not until after he had weighed the objections, and had scripturally answered them, that he was enabled to resume and retain it.

That man knows but little of a pilgrim's life who imagines that, in the breast of the Christian whom God has placed in the upper walks of society, these objections have no weight. Christianity, in a certain sense, is a levelling religion. Riches and talent, rank and influence, are no recommendations to God, for the sake of which he bestows his grace. Whatever distinction may subsist in society, the moment the rich and the poor step over the threshold of

God's house, that moment, as in the grave, they are upon the same level—they are alike, "miserable sinners,"—they alike need the pardoning mercy of God in Christ Jesus,—and they must be made equal sharers in that grace which alone can save them. All the distinctions upon which man prides himself melt away in the presence of God, and leave the soul in all its nakedness before him. Now, to the unrenewed mind, this is very humbling; and, rather than submit, it rejects the religion which teaches it, and condemns those who, in its estimation, are weak enough to submit to such requirements. It is thus that Shame begins its operation in the breast of him who fears the displeasure of God, and who desires the salvation of his soul; and many, and long, are the struggles between the consciousness of duty, and the fear of the "world's dread laugh;" many are the attempts at a compromise between them; and many a failure, and many a compunctious visitation of conscience, and many a restless night, are passed through, ere Shame is compelled to retire, and leave the believer in possession of that singularity which is at once his mercy and his glory.

Notwithstanding the decision, the Christian's conduct is the subject of animadversion, and his religious character the butt of ridicule; many will lecture him upon his strictness, and urge the superiority of that liberty which enables a man for a time to sin without remorse,

and without repentance. The wounds thus inflicted are deep and painful, as the ties of respect or affection are closely bound. The disapprobation of a brother is more keenly felt than that of a stranger; the reproaches of a husband are harder to be endured than if half the world had arrayed itself against the wife; while a reproof from a friend will sink deeper into the soul, and make a more indelible impression than the threats of a known enemy. It is, then, in the domestic circle, that the influence of shame is the most severely felt; and I must be allowed again to repeat, that the person who imagines this can be endured without pain must be but little acquainted with the nature of the sacrifices which a consistent profession, in this respect, demands. Much of this reasoning will apply to every station in life. The poor may be ashamed of religion in the presence of the rich, or ashamed to own it, if *charged* with it. But, ere we give ourselves up to the consequences of Shame, it will be prudent to weigh the arguments by which Faithful repelled it, and by which he was eventually delivered from its importunities.

Faithful's first answer was drawn from the consideration, that "that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination with God;" and that, although Shame had spoken much of the opinion of men, it had said nothing of God, or of his word. Now we know that a bad cause has often been made to appear a good one, by

withholding that part of the evidence which would give its true complexion, and by brightening up that which is intended to mislead the judgment. Such is the conduct of the world, in all the representations it makes of vital religion, and in all the judgments it passes upon its professors. It first pleads the conduct of the generality of mankind, and from it reasons upon the absurdity of singularity. It appeals to their opinion, and argues the necessity of submission to them; but, if sensible of it, it carefully conceals the scriptural fact, that these very men are blinded by the god of this world, —that in their hearts they are enemies to God, —and, in their lives, far from him by wicked works. I have been informed that it was once a custom of the prisoners in Newgate to form amongst themselves a mock court, for the purpose of trying their fellow-prisoners. Such is precisely the conduct of the world, in reference to the state of man, as a sinner before God. Assuming to itself the office of a judge, it passes sentence upon those who dare to depart from the general opinion of mankind, and discharges, by proclamation, all who are living without God and without Christ in the world. The believer, aware of this, disowns the authority of the world; and, in the language of the apostle, asks, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye."

It is of importance to our present peace and

future welfare, that we keep constantly before us the predicted transactions of the Day of Judgment. As we do this, it will be seen that God has left us his word, and has promised us his Spirit, as our infallible guides into the knowledge of his will. Now that word declares, that "he will judge the world in righteousness," and acquit or condemn, as his will is our aim, and his word our choice. He works no miracle to convince of the truth of it; he suffers no departed spirit to reveal to us the secrets of the eternal world; he presents to our view no supernatural object, to remind us of the necessity of obedience to his will; but uniformly refers us to his written word, declaring that, if we believe not *that*, neither should we be persuaded though one rose from the dead. What then are the conclusions we should draw from these considerations? Why, that the world, which condemns us here, will itself be condemned hereafter; that, although there were now as few believers in the world as in the days of Noah, it would be equally their duty, with his, to bear their testimony for God, and for his word; that the religion of the cross is the object of God's continual care, and the sincere professors of it the subjects of his grace; and that, at last, he will own them in the presence of their enemies; and that, while *they* are covered with shame and everlasting contempt, he will raise his children to honour and immortality.

Thus did Faithful reason with and answer

Shame; thus did he declare that he was an enemy to his salvation; and by these means did he at last succeed in ridding himself of his importunities; for although Shame would sometimes whisper in his ear the failings and imperfections of Gospel professors, and thus endeavour to move the Pilgrim from his purpose; yet, having counted the cost, and calculated upon the issue, he was determined to go forward in that grace, and in that strength, which God had promised, and which Faithful found sufficient.

Christian's remarks upon the account he had heard were few, but weighty; he thought that the guilty feeling which Faithful had been describing should have been named *Shameless*, instead of Shame; reminding him, that its design was to put him to shame before men, in the pursuit of that which was good; that therefore it was their duty to resist him, seeing that he promoted only fools; remarking, in the language of Solomon, that the "wise will inherit glory, but shame is the promotion of fools."

LECTURE X.

Character of Talkative—His Detection and Exposure—His Offence at the Pilgrims—His Separation from them.

Of so practical a nature is Christianity, that no advances in scriptural knowledge, however great, nor exposition of its truths, however sound, can supply the place of that obedience to its precepts which forms the best evidence of an interest in its blessings. It becomes us therefore to be upon our guard, lest we substitute hearing and talking for submission to the will of God,—for endeavours to promote his glory,—and for that personal holiness without which no man can see him. The character of a railer is a most despicable one. While, therefore, I wish to avoid incurring the suspicion of being such, truth compels me to declare that there are persons to be found, in almost every congregation, who *say* but *do not*. Their attendance upon the worship of God may be exemplary, their approbation of the truths of the Gospel may be unqualified; they may admire the preacher, and speak well of the excellency of the Christian religion;—but, as to any practical results flowing from all this, you may as well expect the dumb to speak, and the deaf to hear. They will talk of the excellency of charity. Tell them you can offer them an opportunity for the display of theirs, and they will involuntarily

raise their hands to their pockets, as if you had a design upon them. Say that the cause of God is going forward, and needs support; and they will reply that "God can work without means, as well as with them." Ask them to interest themselves in the behalf of some poor orphan; and they will reply that they really have so much business of their own to attend to that they cannot spare the time.

I once waited upon a gentleman of this description, on the behalf of a congregation, and urged the importance of the case which I put into his hands. "Really," was the reply, "we have now so many cases of this sort that it is impossible to attend to them all." "Ask him," said a person who knew him, "how many of those cases *he* has contributed to." "We wait upon you, sir, on behalf of the Bible Society." "It is an excellent institution; but, as I have never contributed any thing towards it yet, I shall not begin now." "We think of educating a few poor children, and beg of you a little assistance towards defraying the rent of the room." "A very noble work indeed! but I cannot afford to give you any thing."

I do not apply these remarks to those who are compelled to refuse, because providence has limited their means; nor to those who are strangers to Gospel motives: but I do apply them, in all their force, and in all their condemnation, to those who have an abundance of this world's goods, and who profess to be influenced

by the spirit of Him who went about doing good; and, while applying them, would ask, How will they answer him, when he shall demand the interest of the talent intrusted to their care? or how will they meet his representatives, in the persons of the once poor and needy? I am compelled to answer, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not unto me."

To lay the axe to the root of such conduct as this appears to have been one great design of Bunyan, in his description of Talkative. To show the inconsistency of a public profession, in the absence of all practical holiness, appears to have been another; and to warn us against such characters, and against such a profession, appears also to have been intended.

As soon, therefore, as Faithful had finished his narrative, and Christian had replied to it, we are informed that, at a distance, they saw a man, rather tall in stature, and rather prepossessing in person. Faithful, addressing him, found that he was a pilgrim, going the same road, and expecting to reach in safety the Celestial City. It was therefore to be expected that he would feel pleased with his new companion, and that he would take the first opportunity of proposing pleasant and profitable conversation. The word "discourse," had no sooner passed from the lips of Faithful, than it touched the secret spring of all his companion's religion; and, like the vibration of strings in

unison, nothing but *talk* was heard from him during the time that they were with him. Talkative rose considerably in Faithful's estimation, when he declared, "how few pilgrims were now to be found willing to spend their time in profitable conversation, choosing rather to discourse upon things that yielded no profit." The conversation which now commenced was kept up for a time with considerable spirit: Talkative expressing his readiness to enter upon any, and every subject, and Faithful wishing to be profited by all that might occur. Speaking of the excellency of the Scriptures, Talkative shows how well calculated they are to teach the history and mystery of things, the nature of miracles, wonders, and signs; the vanity of earthly considerations, and the blessedness of living above them; and that, while in a general sense we may learn these things from the word of God, in a more particular manner we may understand how to converse upon the nature and the necessity of the new birth, the insufficiency of our own works, and the need of Christ's righteousness. From the Scriptures also, he continued, we may learn to talk about repentance, belief, prayer, sufferings, and the like; together with the promises and consolations of the Gospel; and, to conclude, we might here learn the best and safest way to refute false opinions, to vindicate the truth, and to instruct the ignorant.

Throughout the whole of this splendid dissertation, Faithful found but one opportunity of remarking, "that the great end to be answered by this knowledge and this talking was to be profited by it." This was during the time that the talker was taking his breath, which having recovered, he reached the end of the uses to which the Scriptures might be applied. David's description of a hypocrite will well apply to this man: "The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, were softer than oil." We cannot, therefore, wonder that Faithful, ignorant of his character, was deceived by the speciousness of his conversation; that he should inwardly congratulate himself on the acquisition that he and Christian would have to their comfort, in the company of a person so learned and so pious as his new fellow-traveller seemed to be. This good opinion of him was also abundantly confirmed, as he heard Talkative confess "the insufficiency of human learning, for the attaining a saving knowledge of salvation," backing this acknowledgment with a hundred texts of Scripture, should they be necessary, to prove it. As, however, no man can talk upon more than one subject at a time, Faithful asked, "Upon what one thing shall our discourse be founded?" "Upon what you will," was the reply; "I can talk of things heavenly, moral, or evangelical, sacred or profane,—things past, or things to come,—things foreign, or things at home,—things more essential, or things cir-

cumstantial;—only let them be done to profit." Faithful could hold no longer. The talker had won his affections; and, in the fulness of his heart, he exclaimed, "What a brave companion have we got! Surely this man will make an excellent pilgrim!"

My hearers have been tempted to ask, What has become of Christian throughout this conversation? The fact is, Christian knew him too well to be imposed upon by his appearance, or to be deceived by his tongue. How great then must have been the surprise of Faithful, at learning that this great talker, this smooth-tongued professor was one of the greatest villains upon the face of the earth; that he was a tyrant in his family, a cheat in his business, a drunkard among sots, and in heart an enemy to God by wicked works! That this sentence may not appear too severe, Christian declared that he had seen him at home and abroad. In his family there was no more religion than there is savour in the white of an egg. His servants neither knew how to work sufficiently hard for him, nor to speak to him so as to have a decent answer. His children, instead of being brought up in the fear of the Lord, were early taught to lie and to cheat, and, for the manifestation of any tenderness of conscience, were called fools and blockheads! To make up the character, and to finish the description of the conduct, of this bad and black professor, he was as the dead fly in the ointment of the apothecary

to that part of the town wherein he resided, and the stumbling-block of those who, but for him, might have been won to the love of a pilgrim's life.

Such is good Bunyan's delineation of those men who make religion a stalking-horse, until they have preyed upon the unsuspecting; who use it as a mask, until they have imposed upon those whose good opinion they are anxious to gain; but who, while doing this, are securing the destruction of their own souls. It is a painful, but a necessary task, to show to whom this description will apply.

Negatively, it does not apply to him who, under a sense of the continued goodness of God, feels himself, out of the fulness of his heart, compelled to speak of that goodness to others. To be silent, under these circumstances, would be to bring guilt upon his conscience, and to withhold the encouragement that others might receive. David's invitation was, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." "Go home to thy friends," said our Lord to him out of whom a legion of devils had been cast, "and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." Neither will it apply to him who, earnest for the salvation of his friends or relatives, frequently calls their attention to those subjects which connect with their present and with their future happiness. This is a most essential part of a believer's duty; and he offers

the best evidence of his own interest in the blessings of redemption, who manifests the greatest anxiety that others may be made partakers of them. Hence it was a command given to the people of Israel: "And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Neither does it apply to those who, called upon to defend the truths of the Gospel, prove themselves able to give a reason for the hope they enjoy; and show that Christianity is not only able to meet, but to repel, the slander and the malice of its foes.

But the character of Talkative will well suit that man who hears the Gospel, and who reads the Bible, not for the instruction of his mind, nor for the comfort of his soul, but merely to show how extensive his scriptural knowledge is, and with what ability he is able to display it. A desire for controversy, a contention for trifles, and a determination to out-talk his disputants, are the marks which distinguish a man of Talkative's character. How much at variance is this with the exhortation of the apostle: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined to-

gether in the same mind, and in the same judgment." And yet these persons think themselves at liberty to rouse the bad feelings of our nature, by contradiction in those things which are not worth the words bestowed upon them,—to contend for victory in trifles, of which children might be ashamed,—and to worse than waste that time which God has given us to prepare for eternity in! Another description of talkers is to be found in those persons who, no matter in what company, nor in what place, cast the truths of the Gospel like "pearls before swine," and expose religion to the contempt of those who neither understand its nature, nor feel their need of it. To these Christian refers, when he says, "This man" (meaning Talkative), "is for any company, and for any talk. As he talketh now with you, so will he talk when he is on the ale-bench; and the more drink he hath in his crown, the more of these things he hath in his mouth. Religion hath no place in his heart, or house, or conversation; all he hath, lieth in his tongue; and his religion is to make a noise therewith." The religion of Jesus Christ was never intended to be the theme of the drunkard's boast,—was never intended to amuse a company of thoughtless persons,—nor given to afford an opportunity for the display of sottish eloquence. The description will apply to those who neglect the most known and positive duties of their stations, for the purpose of hearing as many sermons in the week as there are evenings

in it. A diligent and punctual attendance upon the Sabbath is a duty that cannot be compromised for any thing that the blessing of God may not be asked upon. I do not apprehend that this will apply to week-day service. I knew a female who followed an itinerant preacher almost wherever he went. Her husband was a labouring man, whose principal meal was taken when his labour was over. He has returned home in the evening and found his door locked, and his wife gone to hear preaching. What opinion must such a person form of the Gospel? I question whether it would not make a good husband a bad one, and a bad one worse than he was before. She may go round to her neighbours and talk of her "persecution for righteousness' sake;" she may talk of the life she leads because of her determination to attend upon the means of grace; but such a person has yet to learn that an attention to the comforts of her husband and children is part of Christianity; and that she cannot acceptably serve God while neglecting them. "Bless you!" said an aged female once to Mr. Whitfield, after preaching, "your sermon has done my soul good." "Go home, you dirty creature," was the reply, "and wash your face, and mend your stockings, before you talk about preaching."

Your time forbids my extending the application of Talkative's character to many more professors, whose conduct merits it, or I would

mention the person who, like Diotrephes, is always contending for the mastery; who is the leader of every party formed against the minister, or against the peace of the church, and who, by his *talk*, brings over to his opinion the weak and unsuspecting. I would mention those who live upon the reputation of the slandered; who carry from house to house the falsehoods for which they must render an account to God; and who, while they destroy the peace of families, heap up wrath to themselves against the day of wrath. And, finally, I would include all, of every denomination, who talk about that religion which has never taught them to bridle their own tongues; observing that, if the character which has now been held up to public notice deserves the severest reprehension, there is no language adequate to the description of those who, under the cloak of religion, lie, cheat, and do those things which a heathen would be ashamed even to be suspected of.

We have already glanced at Faithful's surprise, when he heard the character of Talkative, and which his reliance upon Christian's veracity compelled him to believe. The disclosure, although painful, was a profitable one to Faithful, as it more clearly taught him the difference between saying and doing. The conversation which passed between them was illustrative of this distinction; and the determination they came to was, that Faithful should again

join Talkative; and, renewing the conversation, should introduce the *power* of religion, as its subject, and plainly ask him, whether or not that power was found in his heart, his house, or his conversation. He accordingly rejoined him; and, as the choice of the subject was left to Faithful, he selected the one agreed upon between himself and Christian; and which he thus framed: "How doth the saving grace of God discover itself in the heart of man?" Before, however, it is answered by Talkative, or explained by Faithful, it may be well for *us* to pause, and consider it as a subject in which our peace and happiness are deeply involved. It will be well for us to try the state of our own souls by it, and to carry with us the full conviction, that the saving grace of God cannot long remain in the heart without the fruits of it appearing in the life.

Talkative's first evidence was a most fallacious one. "It will manifest itself," said he, "by a great outcry against sin." Faithful stopped him, by asserting that it would rather manifest itself by inclining the soul to abhor sin; urging, as his reasons, the variety of motives under the influence of which a man may raise a great outcry against that sin, the love of which may still be retained in the heart. Joseph's mistress was an example: she cried out with a loud voice, although, a few minutes before, she had tempted her servant to sin; but who, like Satan, failing as a tempter, then

became his accuser. He instanced the case of a mother with a fretful child, who in one breath scolds and threatens; and, in another, expresses her love for the child. This distinction was too nice for Talkative to see; and he was at a loss to know what difference there could be between crying out against, and abhorring, sin; forgetful, too, that it is very possible for a man to preach against that which he lives in the practice of himself; and that the hypocrite has publicly protested, and perhaps publicly prayed, against the very sins for which his conscience, at the moment, has condemned him.

Talkative's second evidence of a work of divine grace was as bad as his first: "Great knowledge," said he, "of Gospel mysteries!" Faithful's answer may be anticipated. This evidence should have been first; but, first or last, it is also false. Great knowledge may be obtained in the mysteries of the Gospel without any work of grace in the soul. Hence the apostle Paul said, "Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." To this effect our Lord also asked his disciples, "Do ye know all these things?" and when they answered, "Yes," he added, "Blessed are ye if ye do them;" thus giving the blessing to the *doing*. Faithful also distinctly showed him, that the essential difference between the believer and the mere

professor lay in this, That the one talked of those things that were excellent, but never did them; while the other did them without talking about them. This reasoning was too close for Talkative to approve of, and too conclusive to answer. He seems therefore to have turned exceedingly sullen; and, being called upon to give his third evidence of a work of divine grace in the heart, refused to do it, alleging as a reason, "that they should not now agree." Thus silenced, he appears most reluctantly to have listened, while Faithful, from the word of God, and from the experience of his own soul, described the manifestations of divine grace.

The state of man, prior to a work of divine grace, is a state of *spiritual death!* The apostle, therefore, when writing to the Ephesians, says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." The faculties of the soul, and the powers of the mind, are in a state of insensibility, from which no human efforts can arouse them, so that they shall listen with due attention to the overtures of mercy, or accept the salvation which in the Gospel is freely offered. Our Lord also speaks of man while under the dominion of sin in the same manner: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, *and now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." The view that we should take of the natural state of man, therefore, is not left to our choice, after the Holy Spirit has expressly

declared it. Ezekiel's valley of vision is the world; the dry bones are men, in their natural state; the call of the prophet is the preaching of the Gospel; the breath from the four winds is the work of the Spirit; and the resurrection of the bones the effect of that work.

It will be apparent, from these remarks, that the entrance of the Holy Spirit into the soul, as a Spirit of life, and of light, must precede every movement which that soul can make in its way to the kingdom of God. It will also appear equally clear, that, upon the exertion of his influences, certain effects must be produced, which it was now the business of Faithful to describe.

The man, thus raised from spiritual death begins to discover the evil of that sin under the dominion of which he had so long lain; and, beginning to exert the power which the Holy Spirit has imparted, finds, to his surprise, that his foe is too strong for him; and that, although now aroused to a sense of his danger, and most anxious to escape from it, sin, like a disturbed and enraged enemy, threatens his destruction. It is at this time, too, that he recollects his accountability in the sight of God; that nearly the whole of his life has been spent in sinning against him, and that his past spiritual death affords him no excuse, seeing he had been his own destroyer. His soul therefore becomes agitated by the recollection of past transgressions, by the present misery which the

discovery of sin has occasioned, and by the most fearful apprehensions of a judgment to come. It is therefore impossible for the soul to be under a process of this description, without corresponding manifestations, both to him who is the subject of it, and to those with whom he is intimate. Now, among the first of these manifestations, may be reckoned *sorrow* and *shame*. The man has offended the God of all his mercies; he has sinned against him whom he ought to have loved; his past life has been misspent, and he cannot tell how soon his future one may close; he therefore prays that he may be forgiven; that he may yet be spared, and that, now convinced of the evil of sin, he may be led to the Lamb of God, who alone can save from it. His prayers are answered: the same Spirit which opened his eyes, and showed him his danger as a sinner, leads him into a saving knowledge of the way of salvation, through the righteousness and death of a crucified Saviour. He looks upon him whom he has pierced; he mourns over the sins which caused his sufferings; and shame and sorrow evidence a work of divine grace in the soul.

Hungering and thirsting after righteousness are evidences of a work of divine grace, and that the soul is daily gaining strength. The promises of the Gospel are now presented, and the believer begins to see their suitability. He finds that they contain the bread and the water of life; that in them the Saviour is revealed to

the soul; and his daily prayer is, "Lord, evermore give me this bread; continue to refresh me with this water; and enable me, by the strength which they impart, to live to thy praise." As soon could a dead man rise from his grave, and join the company of the living, as a soul, dead in trespasses and in sins, could offer such manifestations as these; and I humbly, but confidently repeat, that, where found, they can only be viewed as evidences of that change of heart which the Holy Spirit alone can effect.

While these are evidences to him who is the subject of them, and while they are rather to be found in the state of his mind than in his outward conduct, they are followed by others of so obvious a nature that the world is compelled to take notice of them. In conversation, religious topics are no longer regarded with disgust, nor is the soul thrown into a state of disquietude when they are named. An attention, commensurate with their importance, is given; and the inquiring eye, and the thoughtful brow, and the fervent wish, all mark a change which no human agency has been able to effect. The members of his family are compelled also to witness this pleasing change. The reading of the Scriptures is but an indication that an altar is about being erected to God, while the tenderest solicitude for the salvation of all that are near and dear to him, proves the genuineness of his own interest in the blessings he so anxiously recommends to others. From his soul, he inwardly abhors sin,

and, to the extent of his power, endeavours to suppress it. His desire is to promote holiness, from the secret workings of his own soul to the very ends of the earth. Fearful, at times, that his experience is not genuine, and knowing his liability to be mistaken, it forms part of his daily request, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Throughout the whole of this description, Talkative, strange as it may seem, has continued silent, convinced that not one of these evidences was to be found in his own experience, and yet utterly unable to deny their importance. When therefore called upon to object to any of them, he replied, "No; my part is not now to object, but to hear." He did; but it was to listen to his own condemnation, and to feel that shame and confusion, which the most hackneyed practitioner in hypocrisy cannot at all times hide. It was to hear himself told, that he was a spot among Christians, a stumbling-block to inquirers, the companion of drunkards, and a disgrace to the cause which he injured by espousing! It was this bad man's last resort, to charge Faithful with listening to injurious reports; so that he must therefore be some peevish, melancholy man, unfit for conversation; and that therefore he felt it his duty to bid him adieu.

I have mentioned several persons to whom the character of Talkative will apply. I by no means

wish indiscriminately to involve them in the villanies of his conduct; or to say that, because they are talkers, they must of necessity be drunkards, tyrants, and cheats; but I wish to show them the sin and the folly of substituting the mere knowledge of the way of salvation for a cordial reception of its truths, and an experimental acquaintance with the power of them. I wish them to see that God will not ask us how much we know, but what we have felt for the honour of his cause, and what we have done to promote it; whether we have been led to the feet of the Saviour for pardon and peace; and whether the uniform holiness of our lives may be referred to as an evidence of the interest we have in the blessings of salvation.

In closing this Lecture, let us be warned against talking about ourselves, or boasting of our attainments, our usefulness, or our piety. Fools may admire and applaud where wise men will pity and condemn. It is the babbling brook that tells every passer-by where water is to be found, but it is the deep and noiseless river that is best calculated to supply the wants of man. Genuine piety, and holy devotedness to God, will always secure to us the testimony of conscience; and the silent, although the not less valued approbation of good and thinking men, will bring into the soul that peace which passeth all understanding, and instrumentally prepare us for the blessedness which God has laid up for them that love him.

LECTURE XI.

Evangelist again meets Christian and Faithful—He forewarns them of the Trials which awaited them at Vanity Fair—Description of it—Sufferings of the Pilgrims—Execution of Faithful, and Deliverance of Christian.

On the night that our Lord was betrayed, he gathered around him his disciples; and, as he sat down with them, he said, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." Those sufferings were now before him in all their magnitude, and in all their consequences. He was to be mocked, to be spit upon, to be beaten, and to be crucified; his companions in suffering were to be thieves; and by many of those who had witnessed his miracles, and had eaten his bread, he was to die unpitied and abhorred. What estimate ought to be formed of the love and of the compassion of the Saviour, when it is discovered that he thought less of his own sufferings than he did of his disciples, that he was anxious to impart a consolation which he could not receive, and to assure them of that grace and strength which would be denied to him. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," is the promise of God to his people; —"My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken *me?*" was the dying exclamation of the Saviour of the world.

Under the full conviction that his disciples

should find the grace and strength of God sufficient for all their trials, our Lord told them that they should be "put out of the synagogues," and that the time should come, when those that killed them would think that they did God service. The manner of their death proved the correctness of their Master's predictions; for, after preaching the truths of the Gospel, they sealed those truths with their blood. Such was soon to be the experience of Faithful; and to fortify his mind, together with that of Christian, against their approaching trials, appears to have been one design of Evangelist's meeting them.

It will be recollected that the last Lecture closed with the separation of Talkative from the company of the pilgrims. Upon this event they congratulated each other, Christian observing to his fellow-traveller, that the words of the one, and the lusts of the other, would never agree; and that Talkative would rather lose their company than reform his life. Faithful felt a melancholy satisfaction that he had conversed with him, and that, by the plainness of his dealing, he had delivered his own soul from the charge of being accessary to his destruction.

It is to be feared that few of us are guiltless in this respect. Although we know that many, whom we esteem, are strangers to God, and that, dying as they live, they cannot be saved; —although we cannot tell but that one observation,

under the agency of the Holy Spirit, may lead to serious reflection, to prayer, and to the Saviour;—we suffer weeks, months, and years to elapse, without apprizing them of their danger, or urging them to the use of those means which God has connected with salvation. Well then might Christian wish that all the people of God would imitate the conduct of Faithful in their intercourse with those who have a name to live while dead in trespasses and sins; and well will it be for us, if, deeply humbled under a sense of our past neglect, we are led to seek forgiveness for it, and if, by our examples, our prayers, and our entreaties, we are honoured as instruments of good to those who, from the causes already assigned, we have hitherto neglected.

It was during the conversation they held upon the events which had recently transpired, and about the time that they had reached the end of the wilderness through which they had passed, that they discovered their old friend Evangelist, who, as he came up to them, saluted them with, "Peace be with you, dearly beloved, and peace be to your helpers!" In sincerity and affection, the pilgrims expressed their joy at meeting with him, and, in answer to his inquiries, informed him of the leading events of their pilgrimage. While he rejoiced with them at the issue of their trials, and congratulated them upon the victories which divine grace had enabled them to achieve, he reminded

them that the crown was yet to be obtained, that they were yet within the reach of the enemy's malice, that they were still to run, and still to contend; resisting unto blood, and striving against sin. He warned them from the example of those who had set out for the crown, and who, having gone far towards obtaining it, suffered others to come in and take it away. He reminded them of the invisible, but eternal, realities of heaven, and urged them to lose sight of every other object; above all, he cautioned them against the depravity of their own hearts, and comforted them with the assurance, that "all power in heaven and earth" was on their side.

While Christian and Faithful acknowledged the justice and the importance of these remarks, they felt considerable anxiety for the issue of the remaining part of their journey. It was therefore with earnestness that they entreated Evangelist, by virtue of his prophetic office, to disclose to them the things that would happen to them; and, if evil, the means by which they might the most successfully resist, and eventually overcome them. Thus entreated, Evangelist proceeded to the description of those sufferings which awaited them at Vanity Fair.

He commenced by reminding them of the apostolic declaration, that through much tribulation they must enter the kingdom of heaven; that, in every city, bonds and afflictions awaited

them; and that it would be impossible to continue much longer on their pilgrimage without experiencing them in one shape or another. He also reminded them of the trials they had already passed through, and assured them that others would immediately follow; particularly, that in the town which was now before them, and which they must soon pass through, they would be beset with those who would leave no means untried to destroy them; and that one or both of them must seal their profession with their blood. He therefore urged them to fidelity, and encouraged them with the assurance of that crown of life which their Lord would eventually give them.—There is perhaps nothing at which human nature more recoils than unnatural death. Aware, therefore, of the impression which this declaration was calculated to make upon their minds, and supposing that but one of them would perish by the hands of their enemies, he pointed out the shortness of the time which the sufferer would have to continue here; the evils and the miseries he would thus escape; the joy he would soon enter upon, together with the glory he would soon be made a partaker of; and that, though this passage would be fiery, his joy and his glory would be eternal. To entreat the pilgrims to remember his advice when called to suffer, to conduct themselves with a worthiness becoming the cause for which they suffered, and to commit the keeping of their souls to God in well-doing,

as unto a faithful Creator, was all that Evangelist had to do. It was done;—they parted,—and Christian and Faithful went forward.

The power of the religion they professed, and the strength of the principles they maintained, were now to be submitted to the test of fire. Assured that one must suffer, but uncertain which that one might be, it was a solemn and an eventful moment in which they first beheld the town of *Vanity*, and prepared to pass through its *Fair*. We owe it to the memory of our forefathers, who thus perished, to pause, while we contemplate their sufferings, and admire the riches of that grace which enabled them to meet their enemies at the bar of persecution, of cruelty, and of blood,—which enabled them, with holy indignation, to spurn at every offer of compromise,—which comforted them in all the solitariness of a prison,—and which elevated their souls above the flames that consumed their bodies.

I have found some difficulty in fixing upon a period to which may be referred the appearance of Christian and Faithful in Vanity Fair, not because instances are rare of persons who suffered as they did, but because they are so numerous that it is difficult to make a selection. Remembering, however, that John Bunyan referred to events which, at his time, had transpired, I beg leave to fix the period during the blood-stained reign of Henry the Eighth.

The history of his reign is little else than a

record of his crimes, amongst which cruelty, lust, and avarice, by turns, contended for the mastery. The two latter are left, as a legacy, to that historian who shall have the honesty and courage to strip him of the trappings which his situation threw around him, and to exhibit him, in all his deformity, to succeeding generations. With the former (his cruelty) I shall have no farther to do, than as it affected the church of God, and consigned to the flames men "of whom the world was not worthy."

It is generally known that Henry the Eighth was educated in the strictest attachment to the church of Rome, and that this education, joined to a temper passionate and cruel, qualified him for the work of persecution which he afterward executed with such fidelity. It was in the year 1521, that he found himself engaged in a controversy with Luther, then employed in the great work of the Reformation. Some severe remarks made by the Reformer upon Thomas Aquinas, the king's favourite author, drew upon him the monarch's resentment, and was probably one cause of that bitterness with which Henry opposed the advances of Gospel truth, and persecuted the professors of it. For although, during part of his reign, the authority of Rome had ceased, monasteries were suppressed, and monks and friars were compelled to seek for support elsewhere, the suffering church of God found neither rest nor peace: Henry was to it as a

bear robbed of her whelps: his will was the law of the land; at his nod, scaffolds were raised, and fires were kindled; while Christians, for speaking the truth—statesmen, for opposing his will—and queens, to make way for their successors, were led to execution. Such was the state of affairs which Bunyan contemplated, while he drew his affecting picture of Vanity Fair.

What must have been the situation of believers at this period, when all the malignant passions of the human mind were abroad, seeking their destruction,—when all the engines of fraud, and of force, were at work against the cause of God,—and when all the enjoyments, arising from the outward means of grace, were suspended! If Dr. Mason, of America, could once say, after contemplating a scene of missionary exertions, "Then I saw of what stuff missionaries should be made;" may we not, reverting to this period, ask of what stuff should Christians be made, who had to meet and to brave these terrors,—who had to encounter men armed with power, and impelled by cruelty,—who lived in hourly dread of imprisonment and torture, and who looked forward to the stake, or the block, for rest, and to death for enjoyment? Blessed, thrice blessed, be their memories! Though no storied marbles tell the greatness of their deeds, nor monuments mark the spots upon which they suffered; yet they live,—live in the hearts of those who

follow their footsteps,—live in the records of heaven, in the enjoyment of God, whom they followed, and in the participation of that blessedness which, from eternity, was laid up for them.

I do not consider any apology necessary for the digression I have gone into. With a solemn determination to give a faithful exposition of the design which John Bunyan had in view when he wrote the Pilgrim's Progress, I feel my responsibility increase as I go forward; and, whatever charges may be urged against me for defect of style, I am concerned that none shall be brought against me for perversion of meaning.

The author's dream continuing, he saw that the pilgrims drew nigh the town of Vanity, and discovered that in it was a fair, called Vanity Fair,—kept throughout the year, and so called, because all that frequented it, and all that was bought and sold in it, were lighter than Vanity. It was founded by Beelzebub, the prince of darkness, has continued to the present hour, and will continue until the power of the Gospel shall overturn it, and upon its ruins raise a temple to God. Solomon visited it, and dealt largely with its inhabitants. He purchased houses and vineyards, gardens and orchards; he hired servants of every description; he amassed silver and gold; and whatever his eyes desired his wealth and power procured; but, when all was possessed, and when all was enjoyed, he looked upon it, and

sighed, as he exclaimed, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." Its inhabitants are the men of the world; its wares are the pleasures and enjoyments of the world; and the spirit in which its business is transacted, is the spirit of the world. Hence the men whose hearts are set upon its traffic, will spare no pains, will grudge no labour, will leave no means untried, to obtain its riches, its honours, and its enjoyments. They will lie, and swear, and steal; they will perjure themselves, and remove by death those who stand in their way; they will destroy the health of their bodies, and consign to perdition their souls, rather than lose the vanities of the world. To those who are acquainted with the nature of fairs, it will be unnecessary to mention the custom of assigning different parts of it for the sale of different sorts of goods. The author has applied the custom to Vanity Fair, and has named a British, a French, an Italian, a Spanish, and a German row. He has made the ware of Rome to be the principal merchandise of the place; but has said that the English nation, with some others, has taken offence at it, and refused to trade any longer in it.

With whatever facility the cultivated mind may be able to apply this allegorical description of the world, it should be remembered, that many hearers and readers are unable to divest the account of its allegory, so as to understand its meaning, and its importance. I shall there-

fore be forgiven, if I offer a condensed description of it in language that cannot well be misunderstood.

When man, by transgression, fell from God, he lost, in that fall, all desires after the enjoyment of God. The faculties of his soul, the passions of his mind, and the appetites of his body, were impaired; and, as with patients under the operations of certain diseases, there is an earnest and constant desire for those things which, however pleasant, are injurious, and may be fatal. The enjoyments of fallen man are of an earthly nature, his views are bounded by death, and the aim of the adversary is to feed his mind with the vanities of the world, until the day of grace is passed, and every hope of salvation is destroyed. The blessings of providence were designed to lead man to the constant exercise of gratitude to God for his goodness; but the introduction of sin has inverted this order, and, with many, the more they have of these blessings, the farther they are drawn from God: the prevalence of wickedness among the rich is by far greater than that of holiness.

From the fall of man to the present moment, the road to heaven has been through this world; yet the generality of men are too busily employed in its concerns to take care of their souls; and hence thousands live and die without ever once inquiring, "What must I do to be saved?" But supposing a concern for the soul's

salvation to be excited in the breast of an individual, he finds it his duty to pass by the allurements of the world; and, keeping constantly in view the prize that is set before him, he determines to press towards it, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left. He may be invited, but he closes his ears; alluring objects may be placed in his way, but he shuts his eyes; a crowd may surround him, but he endeavours to break through it; his enemies may assail him, but he meekly commits himself to the care and keeping of God. Such was the conduct our Lord observed in passing through the world. Neither the temptations in the wilderness, nor the adulations of the multitude, nor the charges of his enemies, nor the terrors of the cross, were able to move his holy soul from the fixedness of its purpose; he cleared his way through every opposition, nor rested until he had accomplished the eternal salvation of man. Such we shall soon perceive was the conduct of Faithful and Christian, until the one passed through the fire to heaven, and the other was suffered to resume his journey.

As the pilgrims entered the fair, they discovered that a considerable ferment was excited, and that they were the cause of it. It is true that their clothing, and their speech, were utterly unlike those which were worn and used by the inhabitants of the place. It excited also considerable astonishment, that the pilgrims not only disregarded the merchandize of the

place, but that they turned their heads aside, saying, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity;" while, by their looking up, they showed that their trade and traffic were in heaven. It at length so happened, that, being tauntingly asked, "What will ye buy?" they gravely answered, "We buy the truth." This reply was construed into a design to insult the people of the fair, and it drew upon them their resentment. The passions of a mob are soon roused, and easily led. Such was the case in Vanity Fair: for a disturbance ensued, which it required the interference of its ruler to quell. Some of his most trusty friends were accordingly deputed to take the examination of those by whom it was alleged that the fair was almost overturned. Among other inquiries, they asked the pilgrims from whence they came, whither they were going, and what they did there in so unusual a dress. To these questions they answered, that they were strangers and pilgrims in the world; that they were going to their own country, which was the heavenly Jerusalem; that they had given no occasion to the men of the town thus to abuse them, or to hinder them in their journey, except it was that, when asked what they would buy, they answered that they would buy the truth. This explanation, although given in meekness and simplicity, neither satisfied the inquirers, nor calmed the fury of their enemies. They were therefore beaten, and covered with the filth of the streets, and afterward thrown into

the cage, where, for a long time, they lay exposed to the derision, and subject to the insults of the mob.

In the conduct of the sufferers we again see the power of divine grace. So far from their giving railing for railing, they returned blessing for cursing; in meekness, and with patience, they bore the indignities with which they were treated; and thus won to their cause many who admired and pitied them, but who could not release them. Consequences of a serious nature were now likely to ensue. The moderate part of the towns-people justified the pilgrims, while they condemned their enemies. From words, the two parties proceeded to blows; and the injury they did to each other was charged to the pilgrims' account. They were therefore again examined; again they were beaten; and, fetters being placed upon their legs, and chains being fastened to their wrists, they were led up and down the fair, to the terror of those who had espoused their cause. Thus were Evangelist's words verified; and as they were now threatened with death, and remanded to the cage, they were satisfied that they were in the path of heaven. Each of them secretly wishing that the lot of death might fall on him, they comforted each other, and committed themselves to the all-wise disposal of Him who ruleth all things according to the counsel of his own will.

We are now presented with an account of one of those trials so frequently mentioned in Fox's

Book of Martyrs; and I am greatly mistaken if good Bunyan did not intend by it to hold up to execration, as well as to hand down to posterity, the characters and dispositions of those who, like wolves, preyed upon the sheep of Christ. It may be worth while to mention, that the Bible and Fox's Book of Martyrs constituted the whole of his library; and that from these sources, connected with his own experience, he drew the volumes which will perpetuate his name to the remotest period of time.

The day was appointed, and the trial of the pilgrims now commenced. The judge's name was *Lord Hate Good*, and the names of the jury were, Mr. Blindman, Mr. No-good, Mr. Malice, Mr. Love-lust, Mr. Live-loose, Mr. Heady, Mr. High-mind, Mr. Enmity, Mr. Liar, Mr. Cruelty, Mr. Hate-light, and Mr. Implacable. The witnesses were Envy, Superstition, and Pick-thank; and the indictment charged them with being "enemies to, and disturbers of, the trade of Vanity Fair; that they had made commotions and divisions in the town, and had won a party to their own most dangerous opinions, in contempt of the law of their Prince." With that confidence which innocence alone can inspire, and with that ability which the Saviour promised his disciples, when he told them that the Holy Ghost should speak by them, Faithful replied to the indictment. He contended that he had only set himself against *that* which had set itself against HIM that is higher than the

highest; that he was not the author of the disturbance, being himself a man of peace; that the parties who were won to their cause were won by beholding their truth and innocence; that their change was from the worse to the better; and that, as to the king they had so much talked of, seeing that it was Beelzebub, the enemy of his Lord, he defied him and all his angels. Proclamation was then made, "that all who had any thing to say for their Lord the King, against the prisoners at the bar, were now to come forth and give their evidence." *Envy*, *Superstition*, and *Pick-thank*, appeared, and, being sworn, gave the following evidence.

The testimony of *Envy* was, that Faithful was one of the vilest men in the country, notwithstanding his plausible name; inasmuch as he neither regarded prince or people, law nor custom; but that he did all that lay in his power to possess all men with certain of his disloyal notions, which he called "principles of faith and holiness." And, in particular, he heard him once affirm, that Christianity and the customs of Vanity Town were diametrically opposite, and could not be reconciled; by which saying, he continued, he doth at once condemn all our doings, and us in the doing of them. More he could have added, but for an unwillingness he felt to trespass upon the time of the court; still, however, if farther evidence were wanting, rather than that the prisoner should escape, he was prepared to give it.

Superstition swore, that he knew but little of the prisoner at the bar, nor did he desire to have any farther acquaintance with him; he however knew that he was a very pestilent fellow, from some discourse he had with him in the town, as he then heard him say that the religion of the town was of no value, and that by it a man could not please God; which saying of his led to this conclusion, that the inhabitants worshipped God in vain, were yet in their sins, and, finally, that they would be damned. Such was the substance of Superstition's evidence.

Pick-thank deposed, that he had known Faithful for a long time, and had heard him speak things which ought not to be spoken; namely, that he had railed on the noble prince Beelzebub, and had spoken contemptuously of his honourable friends, the Lord Old-man, the Lord Carnal-delight, the Lord Luxurious, the Lord Desire-of-vain-glory, the old Lord Lechery, Sir Having-greedy, with all the rest of the nobility; and that, were all men of the prisoner's mind, not one of these noblemen would any longer remain in the town; to all which are added, that the prisoner had not been afraid to rail upon the judge himself, calling him an ungodly villain, with many other such vilifying terms, with which he had bespattered most of the gentry of the town. Pick-thank's evidence here closed; and Faithful expressed a wish to be heard in his own defence. Before he enters

upon it, however, it will be our duty to offer a few remarks on the character of the witnesses, and the nature of their evidence.

It is essential to a just and impartial trial, that the judge be patient and attentive, that the jury be upright and firm, and, that the character of witnesses be so fair as that they may be believed on their oaths. Now the court which tried Christian and Faithful was the very reverse of all this. The judge was cruel and fierce, the jury was corrupt and venal, and the witnesses were called, not to depose to facts, but to swear away the prisoners' lives. The issue of such a trial is not a matter of doubt. *Envy* declares that, rather than any thing shall be wanting to despatch Faithful, he will, after the other witnesses have given their evidence, enlarge his testimony. It is thus that Bunyan has described the operation of that principle, under the influence of which the wicked have often plotted the destruction of the righteous. The carnal mind is enmity against God: as, therefore, the power of divine grace is manifested in the believer's life, and as the effects of holy intercourse with God are reflected from his conversation, so this grace, and this holiness, offensive as they are to the natural mind, first excite, and then draw forth, its envy. Holiness and virtue are mirrors so bright that every wicked man is compelled to see in them his own deformity;—is it therefore to be wondered at, that he attempts to destroy them?

Let us, for a few moments, apply this reasoning to the trial of the pilgrims, and we shall see, in the accusations of Envy, the first, the moving cause of those persecutions under which the church of God for ages groaned. The holiness of believers condemned the practices of the ancient heathens, and they cried out, Away with them! It showed the folly of Papal worship, and Envy cried out, Burn them! It proved the substance and the power of religion, and Formality cried out, This is not to be borne! Superstition trod in the footsteps of Envy, and echoed her complaints. Pick-thank turned common informer, and swore to the falsehood of both. The world rose in arms; the prejudices of the multitude were arrayed and disciplined; and over truth and holiness an unthinking world triumphed with savage delight.

These then are the witnesses for the powers of darkness. These alone can justify the rites of Heathenism, and the mummery of Catholicism! If found necessary to attack benevolent institutions, or to arrest the march of intellect, or to keep in darkness and degradation the human mind, Envy, Superstition, and Pick-thank, are the instruments employed for these purposes. Such were the witnesses brought against Christian and Faithful, and upon whose evidence they were condemned. Such were the witnesses employed against the suffering people of God, in the ages referred to, and by whom was procured the condemnation of men whose crime

was unshaken attachment to the Redeemer, and whose lives were employed in imitating his example!

Let us be upon our guard against these witnesses in our own breasts. How often have we felt the risings of envy against talents superior to our own, and against holiness more fervent and more conspicuous than ours? How often have we felt that dislike for persons, with whom we have acted, which we durst not express; and how often have we heard them commended for those excellencies which they possessed, and which we should have regarded with admiration, rather than with envy? Of this we may rest assured, that we never envy a man that talent, or that mercy, which we should not be glad to possess ourselves.

Faithful's defence, however, claims our attention. It was short, but it was all that his situation required, and more than his enemies wished to hear. He said, that "every thing which was against the word of God was contrary to Christianity; that in the worship of God there was required a divine faith; and that, without a divine revelation, there could be no saving faith; therefore, whatsoever was thrust into the worship of God, contrary to his word, could only be done by human faith, and which would never be profitable to eternal life." In answer to the deposition of Pick-thank, he had only to say, that the prince of the town, with all the rabble of his attendants who had been named, were

more fit for hell than for a residence in that town and country. Anticipating his doom, Faithful concluded by exclaiming, "And so the Lord have mercy upon me!"

When our Lord would encourage his disciples in prospect of their trials, he promised that he would give them "a mouth and wisdom, which all their adversaries should neither be able to gainsay, nor resist." Undaunted, therefore, by the presence of their enemies, and unawed by the threatened torments and death which awaited them, the suffering people of God oftener spoke like judges than prisoners. They felt that their lives were not worth asking for, when the holy cause of God required them. They solicited no abatement of their sufferings, nor were they anxious about the manner of their deaths; more than all this, they counted it their highest honour, and regarded it as amongst their chief enjoyments, that they were permitted to seal, with their blood, the truths which they believed. By Evangelist the pilgrims had been warned, and by the Holy Spirit of God they had been prepared for this hour; and truly could they say, "Greater is God who is for us, than all the enemies who may be against us." In calmness, and with tranquillity, they awaited the summing up of the evidence, concerned rather to die than to live.

It has been already said that the judge was cruel and fierce. The whole of his conduct throughout the trial justifies the assertion.

When the evidence was gone through, he turned to the prisoner, Faithful, and said, "Thou runagate, heretic, and traitor, hast thou heard what these honest gentlemen have witnessed against thee?" Faithful replied, "May I speak a few words in my own defence?" His request was complied with, the judge saying, "Sirrah! Sirrah! thou deservest to live no longer, but to be slain immediately upon the place; yet, that all men may see our gentleness towards thee, let us hear what thou hast to say." His defence (which we have already heard) having been made, the judge proceeded to charge the jury. He directed their attention to the prisoner at the bar, as the man about whom so great an uproar had been made in the town, and against whom the witnesses had deposed, telling them that it now lay in their breasts, to hang him, or to save his life; but, for the purpose of regulating their judgment, he would state to them the law of the land.

The first act to which he called their attention, was made in the days of Pharaoh the Great, and servant to their prince. Its object was to prevent the increase of those who were of a contrary religion to their own, and which ordered all their male children to be cast into the river. The second was made in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, that whosoever should not fall down and worship his golden image should be thrown into the fiery furnace. The third was made by Darius, forbidding any one to call

upon his God, for a certain number of days, upon pain of being cast into the lions' den; all of which laws the rebel at the bar had broken, in thought, in word, and in deed. He had broken the law of Pharaoh, which was intended to prevent mischief. He had broken the laws of Darius and Nebuchadnezzar, by disputing against the religion of the land; and, by his opposing their prince Beelzebub, had been guilty of treason, and consequently had subjected himself to death!

Thus charged, the jury first gave to each other their private opinions, accompanying them with such expressions of malice as their names indicated; and then, turning to the judge, unanimously declared him *Guilty*. Sentence of death was then directly passed upon Faithful; and which, after scourging and beating him, after wounding him with knives and with swords, and after stoning him with stones, they executed by burning him to ashes! Behind the multitude stood a chariot and horses, which, before his body was consumed, conveyed his soul to everlasting felicity. Thus perished, —no!—thus triumphed Faithful!

That the author of the Pilgrim's Progress intended, by this narration, to exhibit real characters under assumed names, may by some be questioned. I am, however, of opinion, that he referred to some one martyr, amongst the many who bled for the cause of God. I am also equally of opinion, that he had some individual

judge in view, whose conduct he has recorded, and whose charge to the jury he has copied. And were I permitted, as a matter of opinion, to state whom, at the writing of this part of the work, he had before him, I would name Henry the Eighth, as he sat in judgment upon John Lambert, in Westminster Hall, whom he professed publicly to dispute with, but who, as often as he was defeated by the martyr, forgot all decency, and with his bishops raged against him in intemperate speeches. For five hours, like a hunted hare, they pursued him with all the sophistry of the Catholic schools, and with all the determinedness of men bent upon his destruction. They soon accomplished it; and Fox, in his martyrology, thus describes his death: "None that had ever been burned at Smithfield was treated with so great cruelty as he. For after his legs were consumed, and burned up to the stumps, and the wretched tormentors had withdrawn the fire from him, that he might linger in the greater torments, having only a few coals under him, two that stood on each side of him pitched him up upon the pike end of their halberds, so far as the chain would admit. Then he, lifting up the poor remains of his hands, while his fingers' ends were flaming with fire, cried unto the people in these words, 'None but Christ! None but Christ!' and so, being let down again from their halberds, fell into the fire, and there gave up his life."

LECTURE XII.

Reflections on Vanity Fair—Christian's Release —He is joined to Hopeful—Character of him— Of By-Ends—Hold-The-World — Money-Love and Save-All—Description of Dèmas and his Silver Mine.

It is a melancholy proof of the depravity of the human mind, that its hostilities are directed against the people of God, in proportion as they bear his moral image. Men of all ranks, and in all ages, have concurred in this one sentiment, that Christianity is unfriendly to the spirit and temper of the world, that its precepts are at variance with the practices of the world, and that its professors may be set up as fit subjects for ridicule, contempt, and persecution.—Acting under the influence of this sentiment, the people of Vanity Fair inflicted upon the Pilgrims the miseries they endured. I have named the reign of Henry the Eighth, as the period wherein these transactions occurred; but they are by no means to be limited to that period. The spirit of the world is unchangeably and universally the same; and I have no hesitation in saying, that were the wise restrictions of law removed, and were the malevolent passions of the human mind again permitted to roam at large, the first object of their search would be vital Christianity, and the first victims

of their resentment the sincere followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christian and Faithful, as pilgrims, were passing through the town; they interrupted no one in his business; they sought to make no proselytes to their mode of thinking; they made no effort to draw after them its inhabitants: and yet they were beaten and imprisoned!

I have briefly described Faithful's death; and upon the Roman Catholic religion, and its supporters, let the odium of the guilt of it rest.* The victims of a degrading superstition, and the professors of an intolerant creed, and the ready instruments of every scheme of worldly aggrandizement which fraud can devise, and force accomplish, they have abated none of their demands upon the human race,—they have manifested no disposition to exchange the traditions of men for the word of God,—nor to suffer man, in full prospect of eternity, and under the deepest conviction of his responsibility to God, to judge for himself, as to the service which is acceptable to Him. Place again in their hands the weapons of which they have been deprived, and give them again the power of which they have been shorn, and the tragedy of Vanity Fair will soon again be performed, and we ourselves

* Should it be contended that England had at this time disowned the authority of the Pope, I answer, Yes, but she retained all the grossness, and most of the errors, of Popery.

called to take a fearful part in it. Look at the bleeding state of a sister kingdom, and ask, by whose hands have her wounds been inflicted? By the hands of an artful priesthood, but for whom, long ere this, would a poor deluded peasantry have returned to a sense of their duty to God and to man; and instead of rifling houses, and murdering their inmates, and exposing themselves to the vengeance of broken laws and outraged humanity, would have been sitting down in the quiet enjoyment of those mercies which the poorest man at times is able to obtain. I am aware that it is contended, that the number of absentees from that country, and the exactions of the middle-men, are to be found amongst the causes of its distress. Let these be admitted to their fullest extent, and it may be asked, Who would live in a country, where notices of death to the individuals named in them, are posted up, or served on them with all the form of legal instruments?—in a country where some of the most unoffending of its inhabitants have been selected as victims, and murdered with a barbarity, from the bare consideration of which the mind turns with pity and with horror?*

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* The following Rock notice has been posted in Clonakilty: "This is to let the Protestants know that there is a scourge over them from the Almighty God. I am the man that will give it, John Rock. Let every individual Catholic

I should not have made this reference to Ireland, but for the purpose of appealing to its past and present state, as an evidence of the unchanged spirit of Popery; and, with my dying breath, I would say to my children, and to the people of my charge, *Beware of it!* It is now abroad, and, in the disguise of liberality, is working its way through England. It has its advocates in the senate, in the pulpit, and at the bar; and the time is at no great distance when many of its secret workings will be brought to light. This conclusion may be disputed and this reasoning be despised; but I appeal to the Protestant ministers of the country for the truth of it. I appeal to the publications of the Roman Catholics themselves for that spirit of hatred they still manifest towards Protestants, and to the opposition of the priests to the circulation

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be prepared for battle, as soon as General Rock encamps. Let every one, from the age of 17 to 56, cut down these tyrants, burn churches, kill monsters, destroy informers. The breed of Luther may know that I will never lay down my sword until I level this proud city of London to the ground, in reverence of King James."—(Here follow two lines in Irish.)

"JOHN ROCK.

"In my opinion there will not be a Protestant living in the year 25. God save John Rock!" —*Vide Hue and Cry, and Police Gazette, for June* 14, 1823.

of the Scriptures, and the instruction of the rising generation. I finally appeal to the transactions of Vanity Fair, and to the mangled limbs, the blood and ashes of the pilgrims, which Christian saw before the Cave, and which, had they voices, would cry from beneath the altar of Papal tyranny, Beware of Popery! Having done this, I would call upon every minister, at his ordination, to declare that, as long as the spirit of Popery retains its intolerance and its bitterness, so long will he, as the servant of God, wage war against it.

Christian, for wise and holy reasons, was spared the dying sufferings of Faithful, and eventually. permitted to resume his journey. His feelings may be better conceived than described, as he reflected upon the fate of his companion, and as he remembered that he must again travel alone. In the latter respect, however, he was mercifully disappointed; for he had scarcely left the Fair, when a young man, whose name was *Hopeful*, joined himself to him, determined to share with him a pilgrim's life, and to unite himself to him in a brotherly covenant.

Did persecutors know that the blood of the martyrs had often (perhaps always) proved the seed of the church, worldly policy would have taught them the importance of Gamaliel's advice: "Refrain from these men, and let them alone:" they would have learned that, like the fabled Phœnix, from the ashes of the *dead*, living believers have arisen to praise the Lord.

Hopeful saw with what meekness the pilgrims took the indignities offered to them in the Fair, and was won to the cause of God by their example. His determination was that of Ruth's, when Naomi wished her to return home: "Whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Nor was Hopeful the only instance of the effects produced by their sufferings in Vanity Fair; for he informed Christian that there were many more men in the Fair who would take their time, and follow after.

Thus the pilgrims, united in heart and in object, travelled onwards until they overtook one, whose name proved to be *By-ends*, and who, as well as themselves, had commenced a pilgrimage. He informed them that he was from the town of *Fair-speech*, to the greater part of whose inhabitants he was related. He described himself as a gentleman of good quality, although his great-grandfather was but a waterman, looking one way, and rowing another; acknowledging that by the same trade he himself had acquired a good property. He was also a married man, and he described his wife as being a most excellent woman; indeed, so accomplished that she knew how to suit her behaviour to the company she was in, from the prince to the peasant. And, to conclude, he said there were only two points of difference between them and the stricter sort of pilgrims: The first was, they

never strove against wind and tide; the second was, that they were always the most zealous, when religion went in her silver slippers, and loved most to walk with her when the sun shone, and people applauded her. It now occurred to Christian, that he had previously been acquainted with this professor; and, stepping aside to Hopeful, he whispered, "It runs in my mind, that this is one By-ends, of Fair-speech; and, if it be he, we have as very a knave in our company as dwelleth in all these parts." At the request, therefore, of Hopeful, Christian said to him, "Sir, you talk as if you knew something more than all the world doth; and if I take not my mark amiss, I deem I have half a guess of you. Is not your name Mr. By-ends, of Fair-speech?" Compelled to acknowledge himself, he endeavoured to persuade Christian that it was a name given him by way of reproach, he never having done any thing to deserve it, unless, indeed, that he always had the luck to jump in his judgment with the way of the times, whatever that way might be; and that it was always his chance to get by it. "But," he continued, "if things are thus cast on me, let me count them as blessings; but let not the wicked load me therefore with reproaches."

Their conversation soon closed, Christian telling him that the name belonged to him more properly than he was willing to admit; that, if he went with them, he must go *against* wind and tide; that he must also own religion in rags, as

well as in silver slippers, and stand by her when bound in irons, as well as when walking the streets with applause. His reply to these terms were, "You must not impose, nor lord it over my faith; leave me to my liberty, and let me go with you." This was refused; and he declared that he would never desert his old principles, seeing they were both harmless and profitable. If, therefore, they would not suffer him to go with them, he must travel again by himself, until he overtook those who would be glad of his company. Christian and Hopeful then forsook him, so far as to separate themselves from his company, while at the same time, they kept him in sight.

So various are the motives to a profession of the Gospel, that the sincere believer finds it difficult sometimes to say what has been his. Characters such as we have been describing never can be at this loss, their own consciences, and the word of God, testifying against them. They may not only be compared to watermen, but also to helmsmen, catching every favourable breeze, and sailing with it, not to heaven, but to worldly ease and prosperity. They wrest the example of Paul, who became all things to all men, to their own destruction. All their changes are from bad to worse; for, as they rise in their own estimation, they sink in that of the believer, who at length is forced to adopt the example of Christian and Hopeful, and to withdraw from them.

I knew a man of this description, who, with a large family, was extremely poor, sometimes wanting the common comforts of life. His diligent attendance at a place of worship was noticed by the minister (now in heaven), who recommended him to some of the wealthy part of his congregation, by whom, from time to time, this man and his family were relieved. His piety appeared to increase in the ratio of the kindness he received; he was at length elevated to the clerk's desk; he gradually rose in life, until he felt himself independent of his chapel friends; the good old minister died; the mask was no longer necessary; and his real character soon disclosed itself, and his real motives were soon declared. When the iniquity of his conduct became too great for concealment, and when those who had first noticed him expressed their surprise and regret at it, he replied that he never sincerely professed religion, but found that it answered his purpose in getting forward in life; and, that accomplished, he wanted no more of it. His conduct confirmed this declaration: one of the London theatres was his favourite resort, and he rushed into its vices. A young and an interesting female was intrusted to his care, for the purposes of education; he accomplished her destruction; and, to complete his wickedness, he became both a swearer and a drunkard! And yet this was the man who once led in one of the highest acts of public devotion, who once a month met with his friends in succession

at their houses, for prayer and for praise, who afterward, serpent-like, crawled into wealth, and bloated himself with what are falsely called the good things of this world.

It may be asked, Will not the description of such characters as these affect religion? No! no more than a counterfeit coin can affect the value of a real one. It is an argument in favour of it, that such men as By-ends find it worth their while to assume it as a disguise, under which to forward their purposes of villany. They know that Christianity contains all the essentials of morality and virtue; that these are the only passports to the affections of wise and good men; and that, the more they exhibit of them, the more likely are they to succeed. Never is the devil more likely to gain his purpose than when he assumes the appearance of an angel of light; and never is destruction more sure than when religion is assumed for base and wicked purposes.

In the character of By-ends may be read the conduct of those persons, who change their creed with the times in which they live, and the circumstances under which they are placed. Before, and in Bunyan's days, it was from Popery to Protestantism, and from Protestantism to Popery, as the rulers of the land determined Like the far-famed vicar of Bray, amidst all the changes of his times, unchangeably determined to retain his vicarage; so do such unholy professors wait for a fine day, when religion may

be seen abroad; and then most zealously follow it until they have shared its respectability, and gleaned its advantages. They then wait, with equal attention, for an opportunity of retiring from it; and their greatest fear afterward is, lest they should be suspected of sincerity in the profession they have made.

Ministers, and officers of Christian churches, would find the study of human nature amongst the most important and most profitable of their employments. They would find it a book so constantly opened that it would be scarcely possible for them to converse with an individual, without gaining information. I do not mean that they should degrade themselves as spies upon the conduct of their acquaintance; but I do mean to say that they should try the conduct, the character, and the temper of those who offer themselves as candidates for their esteem, or who propose themselves as members for Christian communion. To the neglect of this study may be traced many of those dissensions which have rent the churches of Christ into factions, which have destroyed the peace of their members, and hindered the usefulness of their ministers.

By-ends, who lingered behind, in hopes of company better suited to his inclinations and views than Christian and Hopeful were, was soon overtaken by three men, whose names were *Hold-the-world*, *Money-love*, and *Save-all*. Three polite bows proved their acquaintance with

By-ends, whom they complimented upon finding he had embraced a pilgrim's life. These four worthies had formerly been school-fellows under *Mr. Gripeman* in *Lovegain*, a market-town in the county of *Coveting*, somewhere in the north. He had diligently taught them the art of getting, either by violence, cheating, flattery, or lying; and such was the proficiency which these young gentlemen made in these arts, that they were soon qualified for the office of instructors themselves. Discovering our pilgrims at a distance before them, they naturally inquired of By-ends who they were, and received information, that they were a couple of far countrymen, who, after *their* mode, were going on pilgrimage. Money-love expressed his regret that they did not stay, in order that they might have the happiness and advantage of their company, seeing they were all travelling the same road.

Similarity of feeling can only be known by similarity of expression and conduct. In the conversation, therefore, of these men, the author of the Pilgrim's Progress has presented us with that mode of reasoning which covetous and worldly professors employ in order to justify their unchristian-like practices. By-ends complained of the rigidness of their conduct, of the little esteem in which they held worldly opinions, and of their separating from their company all who essentially differed from them. This conduct Save-all condemned, remarking that even the Scripture spoke of some who were righteous

overmuch. As, however, By-ends had but generally spoken of their contracted views, he wished to know what those things were in which they so essentially differed.

We ourselves are aware of those points of difference, and it is therefore unnecessary to repeat them. Hold-the-world, however, was no sooner made acquainted with them, than he most cordially subscribed to the objections which By-ends urged; and, with all that sagacity which worldly practices are able to impart, he urged By-ends to retain those objections, counting him a fool who, having the liberty to keep what he has gained, should be so unwise as to part with it, enforcing this declaration with the Scriptural command, to be "wise as serpents," but withholding the charge, to blend with this wisdom the harmlessness of the dove. Referring to the bee, he stated the necessity of lying still in winter, considering them as fools who would encounter its severities, when, by waiting, they might have sunshine and fair weather. He endeavoured also to prove, that the very purpose for which God gave us the good things of this world, was, that we might keep them to ourselves for his sake, fortifying these positions, like the devil of old, with an appeal to that Scripture in Job, which declares that a good man "shall lay up gold as dust."

With reason and Scripture on the side of such arguments as these, they could not do otherwise than highly approve of them; and as they now

sufficiently understood each other, it was deemed prudent, and might be profitable, to discuss the following question, which By-ends proposed. "Suppose a man, a minister, or a tradesman, should have an advantage lie before him to get the good blessings of this life, yet so as that he can by no means come at them, except in appearance, at least, he become extraordinarily zealous in some points of religion that he meddled not with before, may he not use this means to obtain his end, and yet be a right honest man?"

Money-love at once saw the drift of the question, and gave the following answer, beginning with a minister: "Suppose," said he, "a minister, a worthy man, possessed of a very small benefice, has in his eye a greater, more fat and plump by far: he has also an opportunity of getting it; but, in order to this, he must be more studious, more frequent and more zealous in preaching; and, because the temper of the people requires it, he must alter some of his principles: I see no reason why he may not do all these things, provided he has a call, and yet be an honest man. First, Because his desire of a greater benefice is lawful; this cannot be contradicted, since it is set before him in providence. So then he may get it if he can, making no question for conscience' sake. Secondly, Because his desire after that benefice makes him more studious, a more zealous preacher, and therefore a better

man. It is also the means of improving his talent, which is according to the mind of God. And, thirdly, As for complying with the temper of the people, by deserting some of his principles, this argues a sweetness of disposition, which, of course, will render him more fit for the ministerial function. Then, fourthly, from all this it may be inferred, that a change from a small to a great benefice is so commendable, that the person who does it ought to be applauded for the improvement of his worldly condition, seeing that it enables him to do more good than he could do before."

Nearly the whole of this reasoning he applied to the case of a tradesman, contending that, by any, and by every means, a man ought to get forward in the world; and if, by assuming religion, so much the more meritorious. Now, so far from offering any opposition to this mode of answering the question, which By-ends proposed, it was so highly approved of that they determined upon making Christian and Hopeful acquainted with it; convinced that they would be unable to offer any solid objection to it. How great, therefore, must have been their surprise at hearing, from Christian, the most unqualified reprobation of the answer, and of the spirit which dictated it! He told them that heathens, hypocrites, devils, and witches, were only capable of such conduct as the answer supposed, and which they approved of; that Hamor and Shechem were guilty of it, when

they underwent circumcision to obtain the daughter and the cattle of Jacob; that the answer contained the creed of the Pharisees, who, for a *pretence*, made long prayers, and received for themselves greater damnation; and that Judas, and Simon Magus, acted according to it, when the one sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver, and the other offered money for the gifts of the Holy Spirit!

With that fidelity, which a knowledge of their characters demanded, Christian proceeded to show them the more than probability, that whoever took up religion from worldly motives would most assuredly lay it down again, when his interest required it; instancing the case of Judas, who followed Christ for what he could gain by it, and sold him when all hopes of gaining more were gone. Again, he answered their most wretched conclusions, by declaring that it was heathenish, hypocritical, and devilish; and by assuring them, their reward would be according to their works.

Covered with shame and confusion, they stood for a time, staring upon each other, under the guilt and condemnation they felt, but utterly unable to offer a reply. Hopeful approved of Christian's plain dealing with them, while they, after a pause, got out of the way of the two pilgrims, loitering behind until they were out of sight. Well might Christian observe to Hopeful, "If these men cannot stand before the sentence of men, what will they do

with the sentence of God? And if they are mute when dealt with by vessels of clay, what will they do when they shall be rebuked by the flames of a devouring fire?"

Before we part with these men, it will be of importance to show how extensive are the operations of those principles so strikingly set forth by their names.—There are, in the professing world, persons who, although they acknowledge the importance of the Gospel, withhold from it that pecuniary support which, in their conscience, they know it demands. An inordinate attachment to money is the root of this evil, forgetting the declaration of Scripture, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." If their profession be at all consistent with the principles of the Gospel, they must be compelled to acknowledge that all that they are, and all that they have, flows from the goodness of God; that his blessing upon their exertions has enriched them; or that they, by birth, became possessed of that wealth, concerning which God will say, "Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward." They also know that only as long as God pleases can they retain it; and that, with every other mercy, it is at his sovereign disposal. Now, is it not surprising that, with these acknowledgments, there is often found an unwillingness to contribute towards the support of that holy cause, for which the Son of God shed his most precious blood? How

many poor ministers, both in and out of the Establishment, are the victims of that poverty, which their parishioners, or hearers, could remove; who have less to support them than many a man who labours for his daily bread; but who prefer suffering, to the disclosure of their wants, lest such disclosure should affect their usefulness, by subjecting them to the suspicion of being mercenary? It is doing but little for such men, to invite them to the tables of the rich and the respectable, if their families are wanting at home. It is in his family that the minister of Jesus Christ should find his chief earthly solace; but that solace must be denied, if the members of that family are destitute of the necessaries of life.

I personally know a worthy minister, who, passing from one place to another on the Sabbath to preach, not unfrequently stepped out of his road, and, from the produce of a turnip-field, was often compelled to take his dinner. On one occasion he was presented with half-a-guinea for his Sabbath-day's labour: he received it with tears of gratitude and regret:—gratitude for the kindness which presented it; regret that the necessities of his family compelled him to accept it. "A halfpenny a week," observed another minister, "from each of my congregation, would save me from the drudgery of a school, and enable me to devote my time to their interests;"—the halfpenny was withheld, and he has since

exchanged his situation! Did the respectable part of our parishes, or of our Christian societies, rightly estimate the value of the Gospel, —did they know the calls that are often made upon a Christian minister's benevolence, but which he cannot answer,—or did they for a moment consider what a man's feelings must be, when he sits down to study, or stands up to preach, under the harassings of poverty,—how would they regard with abhorrence the conduct of such men as By-ends, Money-love, Save-all, and Hold-the-world! How would they ask, "Where are those bowels of mercy, those compassions, and that tenderness, which constitute the best ornament of the Christian character, and form the most conclusive evidence of an interest in the blessings of salvation?"

I by no means wish to confine these remarks to holy, useful ministers of the Gospel. While man continues a sinner, he must remain a sufferer; and in most, if not in every congregation, objects will not be wanting to illustrate the words of our Lord: "The poor ye have always with you." To whom have they a right to look for the exercise of Christian benevolence, —for the tender sympathies of our nature,— and consequently for the amelioration of their condition, if not to those who bear the name, and profess to follow the example of Him, who went about doing good! May these remarks tend to the furtherance of Christian benevolence! May they remind us that Christianity

is of so practical a nature that nothing can supply the absence of it! I would take the apostle's words in the order they stand, and, giving them their literal reading, would say, "Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."

It cannot be an impartial trial, where a defence is denied. Let us then hear the defence of By-ends and his fellow-prisoners (for, as they are now at the bar of Christian benevolence, so they will soon be before the bar of God). We cannot tell but that the money we are called upon to give away we may want ourselves. We find also so great a delight in getting and keeping, that really the pain of parting with it would be greater than the pleasure we have enjoyed in obtaining it. Besides, there are others, who are able and willing to contribute to every good work. Look at the Missionary and Bible societies, and many other institutions that we could name;—nobody that considers them for a moment will say that there is any want of inclination, or means to do good; *we only want to be excused!* Then be excused! God and his cause need not that support which you are unwilling to give!—A holy minister once said, "I should grieve were the cause of God to go forward, and I not be permitted to put my hand to it." This grief

is not yours! The tide of Christian love and Christian pity is still widening and deepening, though your springs have never enriched it. The tears of the widow, and the cries of the orphan, have been wiped away, and hushed, though your hands have never been raised to the eyes of the one, nor your bounty been employed to suppress the other. Go and add house to house, and lay field to field. Go and amass wealth, until your coffers overflow with it; but, O fearful sight! what is that which, with gigantic strides, is advancing to meet you? See how terribly he frowns! Look, in his right hand he brandishes a fiery dart! In his left he bears an adamantine chain! And now he is come! Feel you not the chain? He has wreathed it around your necks, your countenances blacken, you gasp for breath, and writhe with agony! Your bosoms burn with flames, fierce as those which await your last tremendous fall; while, louder than the pealings of seven-fold thunder, and more appalling than the cries of the tortured at the stake, or upon the rack, the awful denunciations of God burst upon your ears: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl, for your miseries that shall come upon you; your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten; your gold and your silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire."

How pleasing to turn from the contemplation

of such characters as these, to those splendid examples of liberality which, like bright and polished gems, stud the blackness of human misery!—examples of those who lived for God, and not for themselves,—who, by their conduct, have said, with a pious female, "We are but machines, impelled by the love of God, to do the work of God;"—whose ears and whose hearts were never yet closed against the sufferings of the wretched, and who enhanced the value of their kindness by the tenderness with which it was imparted. I dare not mention names, but they are known in heaven. Many, if not most, of their deeds of benevolence, are unknown beyond the circle of those who are blessed by them; but the register of them is kept above; and when that register shall be opened, and when to an assembled world shall be read the account of families, which were saved from temporal destruction,—of the sick, who were relieved,—and of the dying, who were consoled; and of all those acts, for which earthly names can scarcely be found, and which the language of the heart, and the language of heaven, can alone do justice to;—when these things shall be declared, then will the Judge say, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

I feel an unwillingness to quit By-ends and his party, without one word of advice;—may it be received in the spirit which dictates it! Set before you the solemnities of a dying hour,

and think with what tranquillity that man closes his eyes, who can lift his hand to heaven, and say, "I have not lived in vain." If wealthy, of how little value that wealth now seems, compared with that which has been consecrated to the service of the Lord? Think what heaven must be to him, who has lived with God, and for God, upon the earth. Divest yourselves of those habits, which not only Bunyan, and all good men, but which God himself marks with such severity. Enjoy every blessing which your wealth can impart, and let those blessings be sweetened by the recollection, that you do not enjoy them alone. A gentleman of considerable property once stood at a window, with a friend, in Pall Mall. A little chimney-sweeper passed on the opposite side of the way, crying, "Sweep." After considering him for some time, the gentleman burst into tears. When asked by his friend the cause of them, he replied, "I would give all I possess to exchange conditions with that poor child." Had I been that friend, I would have said, "I can suggest something better than the exchange you have mentioned. Send for the child; clothe him, feed him, and instruct him in the things which make for his peace. He will bless you, and he may live to praise God for the exercise of that compassion which raised him from rags, and filth, and ignorance, and wretchedness, to comfort, virtue, and immortality."

Christian and Hopeful, having left behind

them the persons who have so long occupied our attention, travelled until they came to a delightful plain, called *Ease*. With considerable satisfaction they went over it; it however was narrow, and they soon reached the end of it. Their attention was now attracted by a little hill called *Lucre*, in which was a Silver Mine, and to which many former pilgrims had been allured. The ground around it was exceedingly dangerous, often breaking beneath the feet of the pilgrims, destroying some, and seriously injuring others. To this hill they were invited by a man, who stood at a short distance from the road for this purpose, who informed them of the Silver Mine, and assured them that a little digging would put them in the possession of much of its treasure. His name was Demas, and he so won upon Hopeful that he felt more than half inclined to accept the invitation which was offered. The experience of Christian, however, saved him from what would probably have proved his destruction. He had heard of the mine before; was aware of the danger of working in it; and therefore he called to Demas, asking if the way to it was not dangerous, and whether it had not hindered many in their pilgrimage. Demas blushed as he answered (it was the blush of conscious guilt), "Not very dangerous, except to those who are careless;" but Christian's determination decided them: "Let us not stir a step, but still keep on our way." Well would it be for those

who are on their way to heaven, to follow the example of these pilgrims. Few, very few, who have stepped aside to the Hill Lucre, have ever returned from it; or, if they have, it has been with the most bitter regrets for that folly which caused them to sacrifice the presence and the enjoyment of God, for the perishable enjoyments of this world.

Demas was not only foiled in his efforts to draw the pilgrims aside, but was compelled to listen to the just and merited reproof of Christian, —to hear himself described as an enemy to the right ways of the Lord, who, having himself turned from God, now sought to draw aside those who were anxious to go forward; and that for these things he stood justly condemned. Notwithstanding this plain dealing, Demas expressed a wish to accompany them, provided they would wait for him. The pilgrims, however, had had enough of unprofitable companions. They therefore declined his company, while they endeavoured to convince him that, by his conduct, he proved himself the son of Judas, and grandson of Gehazi; and that, as he was treading in their steps, he merited their punishment.

The length at which I have discussed the operation of worldly principles, as exhibited in the conduct of By-ends and his companions, precludes the necessity of dwelling at any length upon the character of Demas, or of giving any lengthened description of the Hill

Lucre, of the Silver Mine it contained, or the unsound state of the ground by which it was surrounded. Demas was one who probably in sincerity commenced his pilgrimage; the love of the world predominated over the resolutions he had formed, and the hopes he entertained; a temptation to be rich presented itself, and, his heart being unchanged by the grace of God, and his pilgrimage commenced in his own strength, he fell by it; which, as it grieved the apostle, caused him to say, "Demas has forsaken me, having loved the present world."

The Hill, which contained the Mine, is one more proof of the art of the adversary, who, defeated by Christian in his conflict with him, had placed Demas near the road, if possible, to allure him to his destruction. The broken state of the ground represents the danger attendant upon a departure from that path which leads to heaven. Here By-ends and his party miserably perished.—To this place many a hopeful professor has come, until, as he possessed the produce of the Mine, he set his heart upon it. Convinced, at length, that the price of his possessions was the favour of God and the peace of his soul, he has endeavoured to return to the path from which he had so fearfully departed. The ground which sustained him, while unladen with the riches of the world, has broken under their additional weight; and he has sunk, or fallen, never to rise again. Well might our Lord say, "How hard is it for them

that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!"

Upon reviewing what has been stated, it will be said, You have spoken with severity of the Roman Catholic Religion! I have; but it should be remembered that it is a religion, the professors of which arrogate to themselves the exclusive favour of God; that it is a religion which, in the most express manner, denies the possibility of salvation to all without its pale, and which, in tender compassion to the souls of heretics, has first racked, and afterward burned their bodies! Belief is so voluntary an act of the mind that no man can command it. The rack may dislocate every joint in the human frame; the fire may afterward reduce that frame to ashes; but, while life and reason remain, the mind must resist every thing but the convictions of reason, and the force of truth. Violence may make men hypocrites; it cannot make them believers. This the abettors of Popery (I do not use the term in an invidious sense) have never allowed. Failing, therefore, to move the reasoning powers of man, while fortified by the word of God, and resisting, as they have done, in the strength of the Lord,—they have flattered, and promised, —they have kissed, and wept over, those whom they have determined either to force to submission or to destroy. They have unbarred and unbolted the dungeon, which tyranny sunk, and superstition guarded; and into its

dampness and gloom, and amidst its reptile inhabitants, have they cast the sons and daughters of the living God. But there their Father visited them; the light of his countenance dispelled the darkness of their prisons, and the sound of his voice cheered their hearts. When they slept, his arm was their pillow; when they awoke, they felt his embrace; joy was their companion by day, and peace was their attendant by night; and thus did their enemies wonder that their spirits were unsubdued, that their countenances were unchanged, and that their readiness for the last appeal to fire was greater than that of their persecutors to put them to it! Let Smithfield say how often that appeal was made, how often its air was rent,—with cries? No! with songs of triumph, which, from amidst the smoke and flames, the sighs, the sobs, and the groans of weeping spectators, and the deep-mouthed curses of a cruel, fierce, and blood-stained priesthood, were heard in heaven, and answered by the joyful acclamations of the redeemed in glory, who, as a tide, rushed through the gates of heaven, and returned, bearing upon their bosoms the souls of the martyred.

LECTURE XIII.

Warning of Lot's Wife—Its Rejection by Sinners, and the Consequences of such Rejection—Gratitude due to God for our Preservation—Description of the River of the Water of Life—Of By-Path Meadow—Character and Destruction of Vain Confidence—Description of Doubting Castle—Characters of Giant Despair, and Diffidence his Wife—Deliverance of the Pilgrims.

When the hardness and the depravity of the human heart are duly considered, it will excite no surprise that our Lord closed one of his most interesting parables by declaring, that the rich man's brethren had Moses and the prophets, and that, refusing to hear them, they would not be persuaded though one rose from the dead. Such is the conduct of the generality of mankind, in reference to the most solemn warnings recorded in the word of God, and in reference to the most solemn instances of his displeasure. Although no man ever hardened himself against God and prospered; although no one ever turned aside from the ways of God, without feeling the evil of it; still man goes on as careless and unconcerned as if he were to be made the first example of; or, in his own experience as a professor, were first to taste the bitter fruits of departing from God. Thus, like the pillar of salt, many have remained

upon the spot from whence they with regret first looked back upon the world, as it lay under his displeasure.

Christian and Hopeful had gone but a short distance from the Hill of Lucre, when they saw, with some surprise, an old monument of singular appearance, with an inscription written upon the head of it, and which, for some time, they were unable to decipher. It appeared to have been once a woman. It stood by the highway side, and was evidently intended for some important purpose. What that purpose was remains to be seen. It was made of salt, and bore no marks of human workmanship. An attentive consideration of the inscription enabled Christian to make out these words, "*Remember Lot's wife.*" Their conclusion immediately was, that it was the pillar of salt, into which Lot's wife had been turned, for looking back upon Sodom, during the time of its burning. A train of reflections occupied their minds, and formed the substance of a conversation, which it will be our business to apply to those warnings God in mercy often gives to man.

Had the writers of the Old and New Testament been so far left to themselves as to make a selection, they would probably have dwelt at considerable length upon the excellencies of those who form the subject matter of their writings, and, with all imaginable earnestness, proposed their conduct as worthy of the closest imitation. They would, at the same time, have

slightly glanced at, or altogether omitted, their great and grievous falls; or, if compelled by a sense of duty to notice them, it would have been with those apologies for their sins, which the depravity of our nature could have afforded; while upon the temptations, rather than upon the tempted, they would have laid the greater part of the blame. This, as men, they probably would have done. But, brought as they were under the influences of the Holy Spirit, they were compelled to speak and to write as they were dictated to. They were not at liberty to introduce their own feelings, nor to make their own comments, nor to express any of those emotions which they probably experienced while writing. This will account at once for the unadorned style in which they have written their accounts of the Saviour's sufferings and death, the various recorded instances of God's displeasure against the wicked, and the transgressions of those who, by the most sacred obligations, were bound to abstain from them. Thus, while infidelity has pointed at the transgressors, and charged upon the tendency of Christianity their sins, it has carefully withheld the fact, that the purpose for which their names and sins are recorded, is that others may be warned of the steps which led to their transgressions, and that the power of divine grace may be magnified in their forgiveness; while, in the cases of those who have been left finally to perish, may be seen, that there are points of

forbearance, beyond which the mercy of God will not go. Now the application of this argument is, that God, by the warning of one, saves many from destruction, and leaves without excuse all who are determined to disregard it. Upon this principle, the pillar of salt remained for ages, that all who saw it might learn the necessity of escaping from the wrath to come.

By the Pillar of Salt we are warned of the *danger of inordinate attachment to this world's goods.* When Abraham and Lot separated, the former, with that kindness which characterized the father of the faithful, gave to his nephew the choice of country, which lay upon the right hand and upon the left. The plain of Jordan was well watered, and fertile as the garden of the Lord: he therefore chose it; and, although the men of Sodom were exceedingly great sinners, Lot pitched his tent near them. His righteous soul was vexed at the iniquity of their conduct; yet we do not hear of any attempts that he made to remove from them, until threatened by those flames which eventually reduced the cities of the plain to a heap of ruins. When therefore the whole of his property was included in the destruction,—when the gains of years were reduced to ashes in a momont,—and when his wife knew that many of her companions and friends were suffering the vengeance of fire,—it is scarcely to be wondered at, however much it may be deplored, that, turning round to cast one lingering look upon that which she held so

dear, she became an object of the divine displeasure; and, as a warning to ages yet to come, should be transformed into a pillar of salt. The lives of herself, her husband, and children, had been spared; the Judge had become her friend, and, taking her by the hand, had led her from the city of destruction; and yet all these mercies were forgotten in the consideration of her worldly loss;—she lingered when she should have fled, and remained upon the spot a fearful example of the prevalency of worldly considerations!

Too many follow her example, instead of being warned by it. Although the Avenger of blood is at their heels,—although the world in which they dwell is devoted to the devouring flames,—and although they know that unless they reach the city of refuge they must perish;—yet they linger upon the precincts of destruction,—they trifle away that time in which alone they can escape, and neglect those means which God has appointed for salvation. How solemn the consideration, that, in the moment of their awaking to a sense of their danger, they may begin to feel their limbs stiffen in death; and, under the fullest conviction of their lost and ruined state, must bid an eternal farewell to every object which has detained and pleased them, and to all those hopes of future happiness which, but for this detention, they might have realized!

By the Pillar of Salt we are also warned of

the danger of disobedience. The command was, "Escape for thy life, look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." Each of these commands were by the wife of Lot disobeyed. Can we therefore wonder at the consequences? Let us however turn the surprise upon ourselves, and unite in gratitude for that mercy which has so long borne with our own indifference.

We have looked back upon many of those indulgences which God, and reason, and the shortness of time, and the value of our souls, have forbidden; we formerly lived in the commission of those sins, from which our companions were summoned into an eternal world, and before a just and holy God; we looked around and saw their empty seats, without once reflecting that they might have been looking upon ours; we have trifled with the judgments of the Most High, and boasted of our indifference to them; and yet his goodness cried, "Forbear!" and still his thunders slept; and, instead of calling to his justice, and, instead of awakening his thunders, and, instead of driving our souls to the perdition they deserved, he has mercifully taken us by the hand,—he has pointed out our refuge, and given us grace to run to it! In the midst of deserved judgments, he has remembered mercy; and we are still among the living to praise him!

Upon the rejection of God's warnings, and

the consequences of it, a very few remarks must suffice.—Men reject them, because, though often threatened, they are long deferred. The one hundred and twenty years occupied in the building of the ark was too long a period to excite immediate alarm. The inhabitants of the old world, therefore, ate, and drank, and married, and gave in marriage, until the flood came and swept them away. Thus men reckon the long-suffering of God for slackness, and scornfully ask, What has become of the promise of his coming?—forgetful that his forbearance is the manifestation of his desire that men should be saved. They reject the warnings of heaven, because they know that many, after a course of sinning, have been brought first to repentance, and afterward to salvation. Such was the instance of the dying thief, who cried, "Lord, remember me!"—and "Why should not the mercy extended to him (say they) be ours? We hope that we shall not be called to account, without having time to prepare for it." To such I would say, Let all you ask be granted! Many have been saved after a course of sinning; but, did it never occur to you, how many more have perished? A dying thief was saved at the moment that another dying thief perished by the side of the Saviour of sinners! I do not hazard the assertion, but most solemnly declare, that for one saved, when as near death as the penitent thief, thousands, and tens of thousands, have sunk into the depth of eternal misery!

I recollect reading, or hearing, of a zealous, pious parish minister, who, during a twenty years' residence in his parish, kept a regular account of the number of sick persons he visited during this period. The parish was thickly populated, and, of course, many of his parishioners, during his residence, were carried to their graves. A considerable number, however, recovered; and, amongst these, *two thousand*, who, in immediate prospect of death, gave those evidences of a change of heart, which, in the judgment of charity, would connect with everlasting salvation, supposing them to have died under the circumstances referred to. As, however, the tree is best known by its fruits, the sincerity of these sick-bed repentances were yet to be tried, and all the promises and vows, thus made, to be fulfilled. Now, out of these two thousand persons, *two*, and only *two*,—allow me to repeat it,—"*two*, and only *two*," by their future lives, proved that their repentance was sincere, and their conversion genuine! Nineteen hundred and ninety-eight returned to their former carelessness, indifference, and sinfulness; and thus showed how little that repentance is to be depended upon which is merely extorted by the rack of nature, or forced by the tears of future punishment.

Had Hopeful been by himself, he would probably have accepted the invitation of Demas, and as probably would have remained at the Mine until the day of grace had closed upon

him. Discovering, however, by the monument, the danger to which he had been exposed, and having thanked Christian for that advice which had saved him from it, a number of serious reflections arose out of their escape, which, by the time they had been made, they found themselves near a pleasant river, called by David, the "*River of God;*" and by John, the "River of the Water of Life." As their way lay upon the bank of this river, the pilgrims walked along with great delight, occasionally refreshing themselves with its water, which they found sweet to their taste, and enlivening to their spirits. On each side of its banks there grew trees, bearing a variety of fruits, the leaves of which had the property of cooling the blood, and preventing or removing the diseases incident to travellers. Two beautiful meadows, green throughout the year, lay one beneath each of the banks, upon which the pilgrims for several nights slept; and as they awoke, each morning, they gathered the fruit of the trees, and refreshed themselves with the water of the river. There they passed several days and nights, occasionally singing, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside still waters. He restoreth my soul, he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

Those seasons of spiritual enjoyment, which believers are sometimes favoured with, are here intended. They occur either after some great

and severe trial, for the purpose of refreshing them; or they are before trials, in order that they may be the better prepared to pass through them. It becomes us, therefore, to watch with care the state of our minds during these enjoyments, lest we should forget that we are on our pilgrimage—not at the end of it. It would be well for us, at all times, to consider the importance of the apostle's determination: "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." We shall soon discover that Christian and Hopeful had to pass through a state of mind, compared with which their past sufferings had been light, and from which the Holy Spirit of God alone could deliver them;—it was a state of darkness and soul distress, bordering on despair. As Christian had, by drinking of the spring which ran at the foot of the Hill Difficulty, found his strength renewed, so the Lord permitted them to refresh themselves with the waters of life, and to repose upon the pastures which lay by them, before they commenced that part of their journey which was so severely to try them.

Having recommenced their journey, they found that the road gradually separated itself from the river; that it began to be exceedingly rough, until, at length, the tenderness of their feet caused them to wish that some easier path might be discovered. "Their souls were much

discouraged by reason of the way." It so happened, that about this time they discovered, a little way before, and on the *left* side of the road, a Meadow, with a stile to go over it. Its name was By-path Meadow. Christian, after some time considering it, concluded that as a path lay on the meadow side of the fence, seemingly in a line with the road they were then on, it would be prudent to cross the stile, and to go forward until an opportunity presented itself of returning to the road. The doubts of Hopeful, lest it should lead them wrong, were overruled; and, crossing the stile, they found themselves in By-path Meadow. They found the path much easier to their feet than the one they had left, and their hopes of being right were now confirmed by discovering one before them, travelling in the same direction, and who informed them that the way led to the Celestial Gate. His name was *Vain Confidence;* and they followed him until night came on. It was exceedingly dark, so they lost sight of their guide; they soon after heard him fall into a pit, which he did not see; and, by the violence with which he came to the bottom, they concluded that he must be dashed to pieces by the fall.

The dangerous tendency of Antinomian sentiments, and the doom of Antinomian guides, are here described. To this class Vain Confidence belonged; and we shall but discharge a solemn duty, if we point out the nature of these principles, and the consequences to which they lead.

The word Antinomian is compounded of *anti* (against), and *nomos* (the law); and signifies *against the law*—the law of God. The term is justly applied to those persons who reject it as the rule of their conduct, and who contend that, under the Gospel dispensation, believers in Christ Jesus are delivered from all obligation to walk according to its requirements. This law, summarily contained in the ten commandments, is supposed by such persons to be fit only for the subjects of legal bondage, who are generally mentioned with expressions of pity, if not of contempt, and are sometimes charged with expecting to be saved by their obedience to it. Now, in answer to these charges, we humbly reply, that the most unfeigned love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and the most ardent desires to promote his glory, can only be manifested by an obedience to his commands. These are the fruits of all the saving operations of the Holy Spirit, the one great design of a Christian profession, and the line which separates the mere hearer of God's word from the doer of it. We therefore most solemnly declare, that there is not one command of the law which the believer does not *love*, and which, but for the sin that dwells in him, he would not yield the most unfeigned assent to. To love God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself, are the prevailing desires of his soul; and he looks forward to heaven, as to a state of sinless perfection, in which these desires will be granted. I by no means wish to charge Antinomian professors

with those sentiments, and with that practice, which they disown; but I would, in Christian affection, ask them, Do you not object to sinners being invited to partake of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus? Do you not object to a beliver's being reminded of his duty to God, reducing all vital religion, and all Christian experience, to the simple word *privilege?*—"Duty, Sir!" said a man once to the preacher; "a believer in Christ Jesus has nothing to do with duties!" With surprise I inquired, Is not the observance of the Sabbath enjoined as a positive duty?" "Certainly not," was the answer; "it is his *privilege*, as every other part of Christian worship and appointed ordinances are; while those alone make duties of these things, who expect to be saved by them!" Oh, *wretched perversion!* which, followed to its consequences, must come to this: That the neglect of all which God has enjoined amounts only to the loss of so many privileges, and neither can affect a man's state before God, nor put to the least hazard the eternal interest of his soul! For men who wish to reach the kingdom of God, without the trials of the way, this may do. For men who live in sin, and contend that God sees no harm in it, this may do. These are the stiles which lead to By-path Meadow,—to doubt, to diffidence, to despair, and death!

The situation of Christian and Hopeful was now most distressing. They had turned aside from the narrow and rugged, but safe road, into

the soft and easy path of the Meadow; they had lost their guide in the very act of conducting them to the Celestial City. The wind arose, the storm beat, the thunder and the lightning terrified them, and the swelling of the floods threatened to overwhelm them! Thus finely, and thus truly, has Bunyan described that state of mind, which, as surely as night follows day, follows the preaching which separates between the believer's duties and his privileges,—which describes the enjoyments of the redeemed, here and hereafter, but carefully suppresses the essential requirements of the Gospel, ere they can be lawfully enjoyed,—and which leaves man to follow the inclinations of his mind, instead of the unerring directions of God's word. In the experience of the strongest believer, there are seasons when he feels an indifference, if not a reluctance, to that constant watching and prayer which the Lord has commanded; and he is now told, that merit-mongers, and free-willers, live more upon these things than they do upon Christ. He starts at the suspicion; and, for a time, folding his hands, says, "True, I have placed greater dependance upon these things than I have upon Him!" Is it to be wondered at, that his soul, sinking into a quiescent state, becomes indifferent to those duties, the discharge of which was accompanied with anxiety. He has felt for the cause of God, and, by his prayers, his influence, and his purse, he has instrumentally endeavoured to forward it,

when he is suddenly met with the caution how he touches the ark of the Lord, and with the assurance that, when the time is come for the evangelization of the world, the Lord will not do it by such instruments as now thrust themselves forward. The current of his affections is now checked, and he withholds his support from benevolent institutions, lest he should take from God the glory that is due to him! He has brought up his children in the fear of the Lord, or watched over the interests of a Sunday-school; but he has now abandoned both, because God alone can change the hearts of his own children, and because Sunday-school instruction is calculated to do little else than train up hypocrites for professing churches!!

I have carried this part of my subject farther than I intended: its importance will plead my excuse. I may be suspected of colouring too highly the consequences of the sentiments I have adverted to: that I have not, I appeal to those who have watched their operations; I appeal also to those remarks which may be heard from more pulpits than one in the metropolis. It was the month of May, and what is called, in the religious world, The Missionary Week. A preacher whom I could name, and who I believe is still alive, declared to his hearers his solemn belief, that the various benevolent societies in London, were busily engaged in doing the work of the devil! He spoke of Missionaries, and said they were devil-sent ministers!

There was no language too scurrilous, nor epithets too coarse, nor allusions too vulgar, that he did not uniformly apply to all who dared to differ from him!!—I have too high an opinion of Christian and Hopeful to suppose, for a moment, that they would follow such guides as this, or embrace such sentiments as have been described. I have merely shown the spirit and tendency of those sentiments which have led many sincere pilgrims into the power of Giant Despair, and kept them prisoners in Doubting Castle, until the Lord in mercy has commanded their deliverance.

It becomes us, while sitting in judgment upon the spirit and sentiment of others, most carefully to watch over our own. I deceive myself, therefore, if any thing but a conviction of the misery and ruin, which Antinomian sentiments and practices lead to, has induced me to point them out, and to warn against them. I humbly contend, that the exposure of error is an essential part of the defence of truth. While therefore it is our duty to watch its rise and progress, it is equally our duty to show its probable termination. This I have done, and I probably shall not find occasion again to advert to it at any considerable length.

In the sufferings the pilgrims endured, they saw the folly of their departure from the plain and prescribed path of duty; those sufferings were rather increased than diminished by their fruitless attempt to regain the Stile, and by the

danger of drowning to which they were exposed. They at length found a little shelter:—here they were glad to rest; and, overcome with weariness, they soon fell asleep. At a short distance from the spot where they lay, there stood a castle, called Doubting Castle, kept by a giant and his wife; the name of the former was *Despair*, and of the latter *Diffidence*. It was upon the giant's ground that the pilgrims slept; and it was by the giant himself they were awakened in the morning, who asked them from whence they came, and what they did, trespassing on his grounds. It was to no purpose that they described themselves as pilgrims, who had lost their way. He charged them with trampling in, and laying upon his grounds, and said that he should carry them along with him. As a giant, he was stronger than both of them, and they were therefore obliged to submit, knowing, at the same time, they had done wrong. The Giant drove them before him, until they came to the Castle, when he confined them in a dark and filthy dungeon, where they lay from Wednesday until Saturday night, without bread to eat, or water to drink, or without any one to sympathize with them, or to inquire after them. They were in David's situation, when he exclaimed, "Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me, thou hast made me an abomination unto them, I am shut up, and cannot come forth." Christian's distress was greater than Hopeful's, inasmuch as it was by his haste,

and by his advice, they were brought into their present trouble.

We are here again presented with that state of soul into which believers are sometimes brought by their transgressions. However highly we may esteem the character, and admire the conduct, of Christian, we are compelled to censure his departure from the advice of Evangelist. That he deceived himself, we are ready to admit; and, indeed, most men do this who bring themselves and their fellow-travellers into trouble. By means, upon which they cannot reasonably expect the blessing of God, they leave the straight-forward path of Christian obedience; they consult their ease, rather than their duty; and, unable to sit with satisfaction under that ministry which points out their errors, and warns them of their danger, they get over the stiles which the adversary has raised by different parts of the road side; and, without being aware of the dangers to which they lead, they cross them, and imagine they have now found an easier road to heaven. They thus, for a time, travel forward with that satisfaction, which novelty and ease are calculated to afford; by degrees, however, they lose that spiritual enjoyment which they formerly experienced; they are exercised with doubts, as to the issue of the steps they have taken; they become alarmed for the safety of their souls; and many, and sharp, are those sorrows with which they find they have pierced themselves: like Christian

and Hopeful, they would gladly regain the good old way, which they have forsaken; and now conscience and the word of God, lifting up their voices, cry, as they point back, "Let thine heart be towards the highway, even the way that thou wentest;—turn again." The dangers, however, have increased with the distance they have come; and, too late, they find that to go back is harder than to go forward. They dread the displeasure of God, which, as thunder and lightning, terrifies their souls; they can no longer find shelter in the consciousness of his approbation; and, in this state they are left, for a time, to eat of the bitter fruits of their doings. Despair of ever returning to the favour and blessing of God takes possession of their souls, and, in the deepest dungeon of Doubting Castle, they are left to mourn over that conduct which placed them in their enemy's power.

It is at this time too, that the promises of the Gospel, and the influence of the Spirit, which, like manna, had fed, and like water had refreshed their souls, are withheld; and, left as they are, to pine with hunger, and to parch with thirst,—to sit in darkness, and in the region of the dead,—they mourn an absent God; —they read their sin in their punishment, and they sometimes ask, "Is his mercy clean gone for ever?"

During the time that the Pilgrims remained in the state already described, a consultation was held; between the Giant and his wife, upon

the best method of disposing of the prisoners he had taken; when it was agreed upon, that every means should be used to induce them, if possible, to become their own destroyers; this being the object of Giant Despair in his making prisoners of those, who were travelling to heaven, whom he found trespassing upon his grounds. He accordingly visited them in their abode of misery, and, with a crab-tree cudgel, he beat them until they were unable to help themselves, or even to turn themselves upon the floor of the dungeon. Against this treatment they offered neither resistance nor remonstrance; they knew that they had offended the Lord of the way, and they received it as the due reward of their transgression. Their distress we are left to conceive of, when we are told, that all that day they spent their time in nothing but sighs and bitter lamentations. They were made prisoners on the Wednesday morning, and this treatment they received on the following day. In the evening, the Giant and his wife again consulted with each other; and Diffidence, finding they were still alive, advised her husband to urge them to make away with themselves. He accordingly saw them again; and, finding they were exceedingly sore from the stripes they had received, he told them that, as it was likely they would never leave the dungeon they were in alive, it would be best for them to make an end of themselves; that they might use knife, or halter, or poison:

"For why," said he, "should you choose life, seeing it is attended with so much bitterness." In answer to this, they entreated that they might be released. The request aroused the fury of the Giant, who, rushing upon them, would probably have destroyed them, had he not, at that moment, been seized with a fit, which, depriving him of the use of one of his hands, prevented his doing them harm. He was thus, for a time, compelled to leave them to their own sad reflections.

We have now reached a part of the Pilgrim's Progress, which demands our undivided attention,—a part which Bunyan has executed with the utmost fidelity, and which many of the tried people of God have found to bear the closest analogy to their own experience. I mean their temptations to self-destruction. Mark,—I mean *temptations* to it. The people of God, in the exercise of reason, are never left to the commission of it. That life is a burden, under such circumstances as those in which Christian and Hopeful were placed, will be readily admitted; that, but for the consequences, they would choose, with Job, strangling rather than life, is equally true; and that the adversary of souls, at this time, waits with eagerness the issue of his temptations, may be safely inferred. The utmost stretch of his power is here exerted, the extent of his malice is here displayed; and, from the nearness to which he brings the souls of the tempted to that point at

which he knows they must become his prey, may be seen the strength, the subtlety, and the perseverance of that foe, who, "as a roaring lion, goes about, seeking whom he may devour."

The state of mind, now under consideration, arises out of one of the following causes: The discovery of some hitherto secret sin, which has cut the transgressor off from the privileges of Christian society,—a continued course of neglect,—or the influence of nervous affections. Up to this time, there has been a sort of compromise between guilt and the confession of it, in the public means of grace. When the transgressor has appeared before God, his guilt has often come like a mountain upon his soul. You might have seen him upon his seat, bending beneath its weight. If it was a corner in which he sat, he forced himself as far into it as possible. His head was considerably depressed, unless occasionally raised to look at the preacher, or to watch the countenances of those, who, as he feared, would apply the searching truths of the Gospel to his own case. His sin was at length discovered; and horror, and despair, took possession of his mind.—It was after a searching application of truth to his soul, that a man once waited upon his minister, and said, "I find, sir, that you are acquainted with the whole of the circumstances; and I can only offer, in extenuation of my guilt, that both mother and child have been taken care

of." The minister was a total stranger to the guilty intercourse referred to, until conscience, and the belief that it was known, extorted the confession which the wretched man made!

A continued course of neglect will terminate in indifference, or Doubting Castle. The form of religion may be retained, for a considerable time, after the power of religion has disappeared. Indifference to the duties of the closet will soon find its way into the family; and, to the pain and surprise of the pious part of it, they find that they are no longer summoned to the family altar, to unite in prayer and praise for the mercies of providence and of grace; while those who are strangers to the enjoyments of both, will rejoice at their deliverance from the trammels of religion. A tradesman, who had, for a considerable time, lived in the neglect of this most solemn duty (family worship), in consequence, as he alleged, of an increasing business, was once surprised by a letter from a late apprentice, in which the young man earnestly and humbly thanked God for the many opportunities he had formerly enjoyed in sharing in the devotions of his family; that God had blessed those opportunities to the conversion of his soul; that he felt satisfied the delightful employ was still continued; and concluded by hoping that every member of his family would ultimately be made partakers of those blessings, which he now so richly enjoyed! What must have been the confusion and guilt of this

master and parent, as he reflected upon the irreligious state of his family,—that the means which had been blest to the conversion of one soul were discontinued, and that he found himself congratulated upon those holy practices which were now laid aside? He, however, did not despair; but, kneeling before God, he acknowledged his error, and gave the best proof of the sincerity of this acknowledgment, by immediately restoring family worship! It frequently occurs that this neglect, like the incubus, steals over the entire moral system, and sinks it, at length, into settled apathy or despair. The company of the world is for a time preferred; its amusements are sought for as opiates; its spirit is imperceptibly imbibed; and nothing short of the exercise of Almighty power can arouse those energies, which formerly glorified God, and brought peace into the soul.

In a preceding Lecture, I have slightly mentioned the influence of nervous diseases upon the mind. While it is readily admitted, that their effects are most distressing, and that, under their influence, the mind takes the most distorted view of ordinary transactions, it should be remembered, that this admission will include subjects which connect with the blessings of salvation. The person thus afflicted is not only fond of solitude, but averse to society. The announcing of a stranger creates an alarm, a palpitation of the heart, and a determination

of blood to the head. The whole frame is agitated, and the mind is confused. Now is it possible for a mind, thus debilitated, to reason upon the great truths of the Gospel, so as to enjoy them? Will it not rather form to itself the most gloomy images of the Father of mercies? Will it not tremble at all intercourse with society, lest, in consequence of that intercourse, the mind should be unduly elevated? And will it not, finally, check every flow of spirit, regarding it as incompatible with the spirit of the Gospel? Such persons seldom, if ever, step over the threshold of Doubting Castle.

Let me, for a few moments, reason with them. An essential part of the Christian religion consists in active endeavours to promote the glory of God by doing good to our fellow-creatures, from a principle of gratitude to him. Hence our Lord went about doing good, and hence he commanded his disciples, as he sent them forth to preach the Gospel, to heal the sick, to cleanse the lepers, to raise the dead, and to cast out devils; reminding them, that, as they had freely received, so they must freely give. While we acknowledge that the miraculous operations of the Holy Spirit have ceased, we must remember that the moral obligations of believers are in as much force now as in the days of our Lord; and that it is our duty, and our privilege, to follow the example of our Lord's disciples, to the extent of our ability. Be persuaded, then, to try the effects of exer-

tion. If God has blessed you with the means, visit and relieve the sick and the poor; attach yourselves to the benevolent institutions of the neighbourhood where you reside; call to your aid early rising and morning air; and, in these means, I beseech you to add that resignation to the holy will of God, and that confidence in his goodness and mercy, which shall enable you to view yourself as in the hands of one too wise to err, and too good needlessly to afflict. The blessing of God upon perseverance in these things will soon release you from Doubting Castle; and, while they enable you to do good, will, at the same time, impart to the mind that peace of God which passeth all understanding.

I have asserted that the people of God, under the influence of the causes already pointed out, are sometimes tempted to offer violence to themselves. I have also said that, in the exercise of their reason, they are never given up to the commission of it.—I would now add, that this temptation is often the last effort of the enemy, and, that resisted, the soul is almost immediately released. This was the case with Christian and Hopeful.

It will be recollected that Giant Despair, after advising the Pilgrims to self-destruction, left them to meditate upon his advice. Christian, although the elder, seemed inclined to take it, preferring the grave to the dungeon. As Hopeful had been saved from the Silver Mine, through the advice of Christian, he, in turn, was

saved from destruction by the advice of Hopeful, with whom he thus reasoned: "Dreadful as our condition now is, and welcome as death would be to release us from it, we are bound to remember the command of our Lord, Thou shalt do no murder. If we are therefore forbidden to destroy the body of another, how much more should we fear the destruction of our own souls and bodies, remembering that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him; and that, while our thoughts are occupied with the prospect of that ease which the grave may afford our bodies, we forget the hell that must receive our souls. Let us also consider again, that all the law is not in the hands of Giant Despair. Others, so far as I can understand, have been taken by him, and afterward delivered: and who can tell but that God, who made the world, may cause Giant Despair to die; or he may forget to lock us in, or may again be seized with one of his fits, so that for a time he may lose the use of his limbs; and should that ever happen again, for my part, I am resolved to pluck up the heart of a man, and try my utmost to get out of his power. I was a fool that I did not attempt it before;—as it is, let us, my brother, be patient,—the time may yet come which will give us a happy release; but let us not become our own murderers." Thus did Hopeful comfort his brother, who, feeling the force of his reasoning, endeavoured to tranquillize his own mind.

Thus they passed the third day of their confinement. Towards evening the Giant again visited them, and, finding them still alive, he fell into a rage, and told them, that, seeing they had refused his advice, it should be worse for them that they were ever born. They trembled at his threat;—Christian fainted; but, having come to himself, they again renewed the conversation upon self-destruction; Christian still seemed inclined to it.—"My brother (was the language of Hopeful), have you forgotten the courage you formerly manifested, when attacked by Apollyon? Do you not remember what you witnessed, and passed through, in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and that none of the things you there saw and heard moved you? Consider the hardship and terror you have passed through, and then ask, how can it be that you now seem nothing but fear. Compared with you, I am but a weak man; the Giant has wounded me as well as you; he has also cut off my bread and water, as well as yours; so that, with yourself, I mourn in darkness. Still, I think we require but the exercise of that patience which supported you at Vanity Fair, where neither chain, nor cage, nor threats of death, could move you from your purpose. Let us, therefore, as Christians, bear up a little longer."

Night being come, the Giant and his wife again conversed about the prisoners; and Diffidence, finding that they were still alive, advised her husband to take them in the morning to

the Castle yard; and, after showing them the bones of those who had been destroyed, to tell them that, ere a week should elapse, theirs should be added to the number. The Giant acted according to her advice; and, as he showed his prisoners the bones of former pilgrims, said, "These once, like you, trespassed upon my grounds; and when I thought fit, I tore them in pieces, as I will you, within ten days from this time.—Go, get you to your den again." Having said this, he beat them into it. This occurred on the Saturday morning. The rest of the day was spent in bewailing their condition. At night, Despair expressed his surprise at the continued obstinacy of the pilgrims; when it was suggested by his wife, that they might entertain hopes of making their escape, by some one coming to their relief, or by their having pick-lock keys about them. These suggestions determined the Giant to search them in the morning.

It was now Saturday night, and it is more than probable, that feeling a presentiment of approaching deliverance, they were enabled to pour out their souls before God. Long and fervent were those prayers, which commenced at midnight, which lasted until day-break, and which were answered by the saving application of a promise. Under the idea of a *key*, in the bosom of Christian, was this promise set forth. The Holy Spirit enabled them to apply it to their doubts, their fears, and their distresses,

not one of which remained; and they once more returned to the light and liberty of the children of God. Bunyan has thus figuratively described it.—A little before day, Christian, as one amazed, exclaimed against his folly, for suffering himself and Hopeful so long to remain there, when he had a key in his bosom, called Promise, which he knew would open every lock in Doubting Castle. Christian first tried it upon the lock of their dungeon, the bolt of which at once gave way to its pressure, the door opened with ease, and they soon found themselves in the court yard of the Castle. Upon the inner, and afterward upon the outer gate, they tried the key; and, at length, with some difficulty, they opened them both, and immediately found themselves beyond the power of their enemy! So great, however, was the noise which the outer gate made in opening, that it awoke the Giant, who, judging that his prisoners were escaping, hastily arose to pursue them; but his limbs at this time failing him, he was unable to go after them; and, in the course of a little time, they once more found themselves in the king's highway.

They had no sooner passed over the stile, than, remembering what they had suffered by crossing it in the first instance, they determined to contrive some method, by which future pilgrims might be warned of the danger to which they had been exposed. They therefore erected a pillar, and engraved upon it: "Over

this stile is the way to Doubting Castle, which is kept by Giant Despair, who despiseth the king of the Celestial Country, and seeks to destroy his holy pilgrims." Their joy at their escape may be inferred from the lines they afterward sung:

"Out of the way we went, and then we found
What 'twas to tread upon forbidden ground.
Let those, then, who come after, have a care,
Lest heedlessness make them as we to fare;—
Lest they, for trespassing, his prisoners are,
Whose Castle's Doubting, and whose name's
Despair."

LECTURE XIV.

Account of the Delectable Mountains—Conversation with the Shepherds who dwelt upon them—Description of the Hills Error and Caution—Departure of the Pilgrims.

So diversified is the experience of a believer that he cannot foresee the events of a single day, nor conclude upon the issues of a single dispensation. When his reasoning powers have been tasked to their fullest extent, and when he has traced out the closest analogy between his own experience and that of others, he is compelled to exclaim, in reference to God, "Clouds and darkness are round about him." The design of this uncertainty is the exercise of

those graces of which he is made the subject, and the display of those interpositions which will enable him to glorify God. When therefore the energies of the mind are exhausted, and when every effort has failed, and when man is brought to rely simply and entirely upon God; then do the wisdom, the power, and the goodness of God put forth their energies; and the believer, in possession of complete deliverance, is enabled to exclaim: "He hath done all things well!"

It is under some such painful circumstances as have been recorded in the last Lecture, that the world forms those conclusions from which it condemns a Christian's life; and, with apparent surprise, asks who would subject themselves to its evils. But it is forgotten that, many and great as the believer's sorrows are, his joys are greater; and that his peace is but like a flowing river, which, though sometimes lost in the rising tide, is again seen when the waters of the sea have returned to the bed from which they came.

The conduct of Christian and Hopeful, after their liberation, furnishes one more proof of the sincerity of the Christian profession. After all their sufferings in Doubting Castle, they manifested no disposition to return to the world; they uttered no complaint against the severity of those sufferings; but, as we have seen, charged the cause of them entirely upon themselves; and, with joy for their deliverance, travelled forward, until they came to the

Delectable Mountains. Here they found ample compensation for the distress they had recently passed through, in the enjoyment afforded by the gardens, orchards, vineyards, and fountains, with which the mountains abounded. In the waters of the latter, they found themselves cleansed and refreshed; and by the fruit of the former, their strength was considerably recruited. On the tops of the mountains they found *Shepherds*, feeding their flocks, to whom they addressed themselves by inquiring whose mountains they were, and whose the sheep feeding upon them. They were told by the Shepherds, that the mountains formed part of Emmanuel's Land; that the Celestial City was now within sight; and that the sheep were part of those, for whom the Lord laid down his life. In answer to the question, Were the pilgrims in the way that led to the Celestial City, and how far was it from thence?—they were answered, Just in the way, but that its distance was too far for all but those who would actually reach it. They were also informed, that the way was safe for sincere pilgrims, but dangerous for hypocritical ones, it being written, that transgressors would fail therein. To this information was added the assurance, that the Shepherds had orders to entertain strangers; and therefore, they told them that the good of the land was now before them.

Having satisfied the minds of the pilgrims, the Shepherds, in return, made those inquiries,

which their appearance as pilgrims warranted; observing that very few who set out for the City reached that place. Their answers rejoiced the souls of the Shepherds, who again welcomed them to the Delectable Mountains. Their names were *Knowledge*, *Experience*, *Watchful*, and *Sincere*. They took the Pilgrims by the hand, and, leading them to their tents, set before them such refreshment as they had at hand; expressing a wish, at the same time, that they would stay with them, in order that they might become better acquainted, and especially that they might enjoy the mercies which the Lord had provided for them. Night had now come on; it was late, and they separated until the morning.

While the Pilgrims and Shepherds are reposing in safety, let us endeavour to discover the meaning of the mountains, their produce, and their inhabitants.—By the first, is intended those seasons of rest and safety, during which the fruits of the Gospel are brought forth. It may refer to the external state of the church; or to the internal state of the believer's soul, when, from the peace he enjoys, he regards, with sacred delight, the ordinances of God's house. This part of the allegory may have a third reference; namely, to show the danger of some of the prevailing errors of the times, contrasted with that security and consolation which truth alone could afford. I apprehend it will be most profitable to confine our remarks to the religious experience of aged believers, at

the time when, having surmounted the greater part of their difficulties, and when enabled to look back upon the dangers they have escaped, and the errors they have been saved from, their language is like that of the Psalmist, when he said, " Goodness and mercy have followed me all my days."

It has been already remarked, how exceedingly diversified the believer's experience is; that his trials are great, his enemies formidable, and his sorrows so deep that he sometimes imagines his soul can never know joy or peace again. It should, however, be remembered, that God has so mercifully blended with these sufferings the consolations of his Holy Spirit, as to render the life of the poorest believer more to be desired than the life of the richest worldly man. It also deserves our most solemn consideration, that, as time is daily wearing out many of those things that can create pain or sorrow, so it is daily renewing his mercies and his joys, until at length every evil will be removed, while every good, and every joy, will be found in that portion which the Lord has laid up for him. Until then, he is favoured with those communications of grace, and with those anticipations of heaven, and with that assurance of his reaching it, which often remove his doubts, and cause him to wish his absence from the body, that his spirit may be present with the Lord.

The first impression made upon the believer's

mind, at this time, is, *a sense of the continued goodness of God.* Remembering the graceless state he once was in, and the danger to which he was then exposed, he is often led to ask, why the Lord had mercy upon him. He remembers that, at that time, he was without God in the world, and that he neither knew the value, nor cared for the salvation, of his soul. A citizen of the world, he looked not beyond its present enjoyments; eternity, with all its consequences, never presented itself to his mind, but to be dismissed, as Felix dismissed Paul, with a promise that, at a more convenient season, it should be considered. His judgment was perverted, his heart was hard, his affections were earthly and sensual, and his danger increased as time and opportunities diminished. Appeals were often made to his conscience, but it heard them not. Invitations were frequently offered, and as frequently disregarded. Recorded judgments were found in the word of God, and seen in the sudden removal of the wicked; but they passed away as a song, or as a tale thrice told; and amidst the appeals, and mercies, and judgments, his will retained its stubbornness, his judgment its blindness, and his heart its hardness. How great, then, must have been that forbearance, and how rich that mercy, and how mighty that grace, which bore with oft repeated transgressions, — which those transgressions could not exhaust,—and which, by one sovereign exercise of power, removed from the cri-

minal both the guilt and the love of them,—which gave him, in their stead, deep and unfeigned repentance,—caused him to look back with loathing upon himself,—led him dissolved in tears to the foot of the cross,—and returned him to society, and gave him to the church, a new creature in Christ Jesus! Every dispensation of Providence, and every display of grace, has added to his sense of this goodness. When the temptations of the adversary have come in as a flood, the Spirit of the Lord has lifted up a standard against them; and as the Holy Spirit has stood between them and the believer, he has fixed that standard upon the shore, and said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." When sinking beneath the weight of fears, under which he for months had groaned, and which he now imagined must for ever remain with him, how often has he heard God say, "Thy strength is made perfect in weakness!" Then, as he *felt* the promise of God enter into his soul, like Samson at Lehi, he arose; the cords that bound his fears became as tow, when touched by the fire; and he exclaimed, Now will I tread down my enemies as mire in the streets! Thus has he prevailed over every foe, and surmounted every difficulty, and reached in safety that period of life, when, like Christian and Hopeful, he could calmly contemplate the past, and joyfully anticipate the future.

A second impression made upon his mind is,

the number and variety of professors he has left behind. Hypocrites and apostates, formalists and antinomians,—all professing themselves to be, or to have been, pilgrims, but all stopping short of vital, experimental religion. Painful as such reflections must be, they are not without their important uses to him, nor can he make them without feeling gratitude for his own preservation. Too often has he followed the directions of Worldly Wiseman, until threatened destruction has stopped him, and free and sovereign grace has rescued him. Often has he felt the influence of worldly motives, and has wondered how he has been preserved from their consequences. He has seen others fall while he has stood, amidst fightings without, and fears within; he has hitherto cleared his way through the wilderness, and, upon the Delectable Mountains of Christian enjoyment, can ascribe salvation to God and to the Lamb. It is, however, time to return to the Pilgrims, who, refreshed by a night's rest, met the Shepherds in the morning, by whom they were shown the wonders we are about to describe.

Amidst the prospects seen from the Delectable Mountains, was a *Hill*, at some distance, called *Error*,—one side of which was precipitous, and consequently dangerous. At the bottom of this side of the hill, the Pilgrims saw a number of men dashed to pieces by the fall, and whose remains had been suffered to lie there, as so many warnings to others. Upon inquiring

whose they were, they were informed, that they had been the followers of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, who, concerning the resurrection, had fatally erred, saying that it was past. As a canker, the sentiment destroyed all motive to evangelical obedience, and all those restraints which the consideration of a judgment to come lays upon the depravity of the human heart. Like modern infidelity, it had its advocates and its followers, who, wise above that which is written, dared to pursue the sentiment to its consequences, and thus miserably perished. Their fate has not deterred others from following their example. It is much to be deplored, that amongst them are to be found men of high intellectual attainments, of deep and laborious research, and of patient investigation; but who, refusing submission to the authority of God, as contained in his word, have erected a temple, and raised an altar, and before *Materialism*, the object of their faith and of their worship, have prostrated the powers of their minds, and called a wondering world with them to believe and to adore. This will appear a matter of regret rather than of surprise when it is considered that holy writ declares, that by wisdom the world yet never knew God; and that the men of it, becoming vain in their imaginations, and having their foolish minds darkened, in the very act of professing themselves wise, become fools; and, changing the glory of God into a lie, honour the creature more than the Creator, who is God

over all, blessed for ever. If, indeed, it be true, that the soul is but organized matter,—that the existence of man is bounded by death,—that there is no hell to shun, nor heaven to gain,—then, styed in his epicurism, he may cry out, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Then may he call to gluttony to spread his table, and to intemperance to prepare his bowl, and to riot and sensuality to raise him to the elevation of his being;—he is but the creature of a day, which will soon close, leaving nothing but one long, nay, eternal night, through which he may take an eternal sleep!

I am aware that, to men who deny the immortality of the soul, the only effect of this reasoning will be a look of pity, or a smile of contempt. Gladly would I endure them both, could I but fix their attention for a single hour upon one consideration: What if Christianity should be true? What if there be a judgment yet to come, and a future and final state of rewards and punishments, that must be the issue of our present lives? At the close of the hour, I would ask, By whom has the immortality of the soul been denied?—by such men as Locke, Boyle, Newton, and Howard?—or by men whose crimes caused them to dread the woe that awaited them, and who therefore strove to reason themselves out of the belief of that eternity which they feared to meet? I would then finally ask, What if God has prepared for those who love him an eternity of happiness, and a glory

which can neither be described nor conceived of? And what if this happiness, this glory, and these joys, that will infinitely exceed the highest expectations that can be raised of them, are to be his, who, by faith and repentance, by obedience and love, is prepared for them?—Yet such is the design of that Christianity, which men of science pour contempt upon, and which the men of the world reject.

From the summit of a second *Hill*, called *Caution*, the Pilgrims saw, at a distance, a burial ground, in which were a number of men, who by their stumbling amongst the tombs, and by their inability to find their way out of the place, appeared to be blind. From the Shepherds, Christian and Hopeful learned, that the way which led to this place was over a stile, and by a path which led to Doubting Castle, kept by Giant Despair; and that the men whom they saw were once pilgrims as they were, but who, finding the way rough, were induced, for the sake of ease, to trespass upon the Giant's grounds; that by him they were made prisoners, who, after keeping them in Doubting Castle, put out their eyes and left them to wander amongst the tombs, as it is written: "He that wandereth out of the way of understanding, shall remain in the congregation of the dead." What the feelings of the Pilgrims must have been, on receiving this account, may be inferred from the tears which started in their eyes, at the recollection of their own wanderings, and the dangers to which they

had been exposed. They however remained silent; and, going with the Shepherds to the bottom of the Hill, they discovered a *Door*, which opening, the Pilgrims were bid to look into. This they did, and saw that the place to which the door led was dark and smoky; they also heard a rumbling noise, as of fire, together with the cry of some as in torment, and smelt the scent of brimstone. They asked the meaning of this, and were informed that it was a by-way to hell. Through this hole hypocrites went, such as Esau, who sold his birthright; such as Judas, who sold his Master; such as Alexander, who blasphemed the Gospel; and such as Ananias and Sapphira, who lied against the Holy Ghost, All these, and many more, had commenced their pilgrimage, and (solemn consideration) some had come as far as the Delectable Mountains, near to which they had thus miserably perished!

As in the case of Lot's wife, so are the names and the doom of these men recorded, as warnings to others; and an attentive consideration will show how needful those warnings are.—In the case of Esau, we see the sin and the misery of children's neglecting the instructions and disregarding the advice of parents. These are their birthrights, which, for the pleasures of the world, are often sold. One act of disobedience is but the forerunner of another, which eventually leads to a departure from that fear of God in which they were first brought up.

So many and so various are the causes of this departure, that it is impossible to enumerate them all. There are, however, some which, having fallen under our daily observation, may be mentioned, in order that, as they present themselves, we may earnestly strive to remove them, and thus save from destruction those, in whose present happiness and eternal salvation we ought at at all times to feel a deep and increasing interest.

A disposition to neglect the public means of grace sometimes appears at a very early period of life, and is too frequently indulged. The day is unfavourable, or some article of dress has not been brought home, or indulgence in bed on the Sabbath morning, are sometimes the ready excuses for a part of the family's not appearing in the house of God in the early part of the Lord's Day. To unthinking, or foolishly fond parents, this neglect may appear of little importance, forgetful how much easier habits of neglect, than of attention and industry, can be formed in the minds of children. Forgetful too, that once yielding furnishes the child with an argument for doing it again, until that which the parents should have laid upon the children, as a solemn and imperious duty, is considered a matter of choice, and becomes at length oftener neglected than observed. The transition from this neglect, to positive breaches of the Sabbath, is sometimes imperceptible, and always easy. Sunday parties are not unfrequently

formed by young people, whose parents, at the very time, are worshipping God in his sanctuary, and who, but for their first neglect, might have been surrounded by them, witnessing their devotedness to the service of the Lord, and their enjoyment of his blessing. A few years longer will see them settled in life. If prosperous in business, it is scarcely to be expected that they will feel much concerned for the observance of the Lord's Day; and, if otherwise, they will find themselves destitute of that support which is inseparably connected with the fear and with the service of God.

It is now some years since I heard a highly esteemed minister illustrate the truth of such remarks as these, by a circumstance which fell under his own immediate observation, and which he mentioned to show the importance of young persons attending to the advice of their parents, and the dangerous consequences of neglecting it, which, to the best of my recollection, was as follows: Two young men, the children of pious and wealthy parents, felt themselves exceedingly displeased at being constantly refused the use of the family carriage on the Lord's Day. It was in vain they urged their confinement during the week, as a sufficient reason why they should be thus indulged on the Sunday. It was the father's settled rule that the authority which commanded him to rest, included also his servants and cattle; he therefore turned a deaf ear to their entreaties

and remonstrances. In their madness, or in their folly, they determined to resent this refusal, by leaving their situations and going to sea. Intelligence of this step was transmitted to the minister who mentioned the circumstance, and who, residing at a seaport town, was requested to make diligent inquiry, and, on finding them, was to use every possible means to induce them to return home. After some search, he found them in a rendezvous house; and, introducing himself, he stated his business, and urged their return. He however urged in vain; for, bent upon the fulfilment of their design, they thanked him for his advice, although determined to reject it. Among other reasons for their return, he urged the feelings of their parents, and especially those of their *mother*. "Think," said the good man, "what must your mother's situation be, after years of anxious watching and fervent prayer; after looking forward to this time, when in your society, and in your welfare, she hoped to meet a rich reward for all that she had suffered on your account. Yet, in one moment, and by one imprudent step, she finds you plunged into misery, the depths of which you cannot conceive of, and herself the subject of a wretchedness she has never deserved at your hands." In the heart of the youngest there was a sense of gratitude which answered to this appeal; and, bursting into tears, he expressed his sorrow for his conduct, and his willingness to return, Still

the eldest remained obdurate. Neither warnings alarmed him, nor arguments persuaded him. The carriage had been repeatedly refused, he had made up his mind to go to sea, and to sea he would go. "Then," said the minister, "come with me to my house; and I will get you a ship, and you shall go out as a man and a gentleman." This he declined, assigning as a reason (if my recollection serves me), that it would make his parents feel, to have it said that their son was a common sailor;—as a common sailor therefore he would go! "Is that your disposition?" was the reply; "Then, young man, go; and while I say, God go with you, be sure your sin will find you out, and for it God will bring you to judgment." With reluctance they left him; the younger son was restored to his parents, while all traces of the elder were lost, and he was mourned for as one dead.

It was after the lapse of a considerable time, from the painful event we have just recorded, that a loud knocking was heard at the minister's door. This was early in the morning. After some time, the servant opened the door, and found there a waterman, wishing directly to see her master. He soon appeared, and was informed that a young man under sentence of death, and about to be executed on board one of the ships in the harbour, had expressed an earnest wish to see him, urging, among other reasons for it, that he could not die happy

unless he did. A short time found the minister on board the ship, when the prisoner, manacled and guarded, was introduced to him, to whom he said, "My poor friend, I feel for your condition; but, as I am a stranger to you, may I ask why you have sent for me;—it may be that you have heard me preach at P——."—"Never, Sir. Do you not know me?"—"I do not."—"Do you not remember the two young men, whom you some years since urged to return to their parents, and to their duty?"—"I do! I do remember it; and I remember that you were one of them."—"I have sent, then, for you, to take my last farewell of you in this world, and to bless you for your efforts to restore me to a sense of my duty. Would God that I had taken your advice!—but it is now too late. My sin *has* found me out, and for it God has brought me into judgment. One, and but one, consolation remains; I refused the offer of going to your house until I could be provided for, assigning, as a reason, that it would make my parents feel, to have it said that their son was a common sailor. A little reflection showed me the cruelty of this determination: I assumed another name, under which I entered myself; and my chief consolation is, that I shall die unpitied and unknown."

What the feelings of the minister must have been, at this sad discovery, may be more easily conceived than described. He spent some time with him in prayer, and offered him that advice

which was best suited to his most unhappy case. The prisoner was again placed in confinement, and Mr. G. (the minister) remained with the officer who was then on duty. "Can nothing be done for this poor young man?" was one of the first inquiries made, after the prisoner was withdrawn. "I fear not," replied the officer; "the Lords of the Admiralty have determined to make an example of the first offender.* He, unfortunately, is that offender; and we hourly expect the warrant for his execution." I know not the state of mind in which Mr. G. returned home; but I remember well the anxiety with which I heard him express his determination to go directly to London, and, in humble dependance upon the Lord, to make every effort to save the criminal's life, or to obtain a commutation of his sentence. It was his lot, on the day of his arrival in the metropolis, to obtain an interview with one of the Lords of the Admiralty, to whom he stated the respectability of the young man's connexions, his bitter and unfeigned regret for the crime which had forfeited his life; and, with that earnestness which the value of life is calculated to excite, ventured to ask, was it impossible to spare him. To his regret, he was informed, that the warrant for his execution had that morning been signed, and was on its way to the officer whose melancholy duty it was to see

* The name of the crime was prudently withheld.

it executed. With compassion the nobleman said, "Go back, sir, and prepare him for the worst. I cannot tell what is to be done; but we are shortly to meet his Majesty in council, and all that you have urged shall be there stated; may it prove successful!" He did return, but discovered that the morning of his reaching home, was the time appointed for the young man's execution. Joy, and fear, and anxiety, by turns possessed his mind, as, within a few minutes after his arrival, came a pardon, accompanied with the most urgent request to go immediately on board, lest the sentence of the law should be executed before he could reach the ship. Upon the issues of a moment now rested the life of a fellow-creature, and perhaps the salvation of an immortal soul. The minister reached the harbour, and saw the yellow flag, the signal of death, flying,—the rigging manned, and, for aught he knew to the contrary, the object of his solicitude at the last moment of his mortal existence. He reached the ship's side, and saw an aged man leaving it, whose sighs, and groans, and tears, proclaimed a heart bursting with grief, and a soul deeper in misery than the bed of the waters he was upon. *It was the prisoner's father!* Under an assumed name, he had discovered his wretched son, and had been to take his last farewell of him. Yes, it was the father, who had brought him up in the fear of the Lord, who, in his earliest days, led him to the house of God,—and who, when

lost, had often inquired in prayer, "Lord, where is my child?" Fearfully was he answered; he had found him, but it was to part, never in this world to meet again. Such, at least, must have been his conclusions in that moment, when, having torn himself from the embrace of his son, he was in the act of leaving the ship. The rest is told in a few words: with the minister, he re-entered the vessel, in the moment that the prisoner, pinioned for execution, was advancing towards the fatal spot, when he was to be summoned into the presence of God. A moment found him in the embrace, not of death, but of his father; his immediate liberation followed the knowledge of his pardon; and a few days restored the wanderer to the bosom of his family. Will not my hearers unite with me in an expression of gratitude to him, through whose instrumentality the life of this young man was saved? May God abundantly bless him! In his soul may he enjoy that peace which passeth all understanding; in his ministry may he have that success which shall enable him with joy to anticipate the hour of his appearing before God; and, in eternity, may he meet him whom he was the honoured instrument of sparing, for ever to rejoice in the mercy of that God to whom the praise of his deliverance is alone to be ascribed!

The interesting nature of the fact we have just mentioned will, it is presumed, be a sufficient apology for its length. It is upon such circumstances as these the youthful mind dwells with

attention, while with indifference it passes by both precepts and arguments. By it may the young be warned how they neglect the advice of parents, and how they violate the commands of God. With impunity they can do neither. Sooner or later, their sin will find them out; and in mercy, or in judgment, they must be made to repent it.

Dangerous books, and improper company, pave the way for a final departure from God. Under the fostering care of pious parents, the mind has been trained to think, and the lips to speak, of God, with caution and with reverence; to regard sin with abhorrence, and to esteem the people of God as the excellent of the earth. But the time as at length arrived, when the strength of principle, and the force of habit, must be tried; the child is removed from beneath the parent's observation, and he finds himself surrounded by strangers. He hears the religion he was brought up in spoken of as questionable; the worthy name of God is irreverently, if not profanely, used; he perhaps is lent, as a favour, the works of a titled blasphemer; and, in the most friendly manner, invited to spend his evenings out. Now what must be the consequence of these various attacks upon youth and inexperience? He becomes familiarized with the frequent profanation of God's name. The surprise, if not horror, he first felt, by degrees subsides; he imagines there may be more reason in the objections made to

religion than he first perceived; he sees less poison in the writings he has been cautioned against than he imagined they contained; and finds that enjoyment in gay society which he did not calculate upon. Thus the fabric which required years of affection and piety to rear, is, in a few months, reduced to a heap of ruins, amidst which lie buried the fondest hopes and the dearest wishes of the mourning parents; while nothing short of a miracle of mercy can save, from the by-way to hell, the unhappy subject of this fearful change. Like Esau, he has sold his birthright for the morsels of earthly gratification; and each moment that he lives he is liable to be called before God, to answer for his indifference, and for his transgressions.

The number of such persons as Judas, Alexander, Ananias, and Sapphira, are, we trust, but few; yet, amongst them may be found hypocrites and apostates, who, after a profession of religion, have not merely returned to the world, but, identifying themselves with the enemies of Christ, like the unclean spirit, roaming abroad in search of rest, but finding none, they return to their hatred of God with seven other spirits more wicked than themselves: and, in that hatred resting, their end becomes worse than their beginning.

Instructed and admonished by what they had seen and heard, the Pilgrims now expressed a wish to go forwards; to which the Shepherds consenting, accompanied them as far as the end

of the Mountains. Here, for a short time, they stopped, for the purpose of viewing the gates of the Celestial City. The Hill upon which they now stood was called *Clear;* a perspective glass was placed in their hands; and through it they had a distant view of the gates, and of the glory of the City. The view was far from being a distant one; but the recollection of what they had seen, causing their hands to tremble, rendered it somewhat imperfect. It was however sufficient to give energy to their minds, and increased earnestness to their endeavours to reach the place, that they too might share in its blessedness. The time of their departure had now arrived, when one of the Shepherds gave them a note of the way, a second bid them beware of the Flatterer, a third cautioned them against sleeping on the Enchanted Ground, a fourth bid them God speed, and so they separated.

It will be readily perceived that, by the Shepherds, are intended Ministers of the Gospel; the note of the way was probably those directions which, as strangers to the road, they would need, or a recommendation to such ministers, or churches, as they might meet with in their future pilgrimage. The time they had remained with the Shepherds had been a season of enjoyment, and the caution, to beware of the Flatterer, argued their danger of being unduly elevated by it. The Enchanted Ground we shall soon have occasion to describe; and, in that description, we shall see the necessity of the

warning not to sleep upon it. The blessing and the good wishes of the fourth Shepherd proceeded from that which every minister feels, namely, a sincere desire that his hearers and members may safely reach the kingdom of God.

LECTURE XV.

The Pilgrims meet and converse with Ignorance—Character and Doom of Turn-away—Christian's Account of Little-faith.

A KNOWLEDGE of the doctrines of Christianity is so essential to our present peace, and to our future salvation, that we cannot scripturally enjoy the one, nor obtain the other, if ignorant of them. They may be compared to the root of a tree, the stem of which is evangelical experience, and the fruits of which are purity of intention, and holiness of life. And it may be said of them as of their author, Except a man abide in them, he cannot bring forth fruit. Under the fullest conviction of their importance, the apostles urged upon the ministers whom they ordained, and the people whom they had formed into churches, the strictest adherence to them,—urging them at the same time, by every scriptural means, to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Our own reading and observation must often have left this impression upon our minds, that,

as men have departed from the doctrines, so have they departed from the simplicity of the Gospel. To supply their places, they were compelled to have recourse to human inventions, until at length the name and the shadow of that religion which has God for its author, and salvation for its end, was exhibited upon the stage of the world, dressed up in the meretricious rags of human ceremonies, calculated only to excite the wonder, and to obtain the approval, of unthinking or designing men. But while this transformation was effecting, the spirit and the genius of Christianity retired from it; and, in the breasts of the sincere followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, took up their abode, having found a cordial welcome. That these men might not be mistaken, they again had recourse to the doctrines of the apostles, and by them regulated their conduct towards God, towards each other, their enemies, and the world. Thus they continued until error insinuated itself among them, bringing with it men of corrupt minds, who, gradually swelling into importance, or rising into power, occupied the seat of pure and vital Christianity, driving into obscurity, and sometimes into misery, those who refused to acknowledge the authority of error, and to bend before the assumption of unscriptural power. Again, the doctrines of salvation were sought out in their most obvious and literal sense, and again they formed the standard of orthodoxy, and the rule of life. Such,

in few words, has been the growth of corruption, and such the origin of reformation. The same obligation devolves upon us which has devolved upon believers in all ages, namely, that of referring constantly to the word of God for the knowledge of those things we profess, whether of faith or practice. The importance and the truth of these remarks will soon appear in the character and conversation of *Ignorance.*

The Shepherds and the Pilgrims had not long parted, when the latter discóvered a little crooked lane, on the left hand side of the road, which led from the country of *Conceit* into the path the Pilgrims were in. At the end of this lane, they met with a very brisk lad who had just left that country, and who, like themselves, was on his pilgrimage. His name was *Ignorance;* and, in answer to the question, "How did he hope to reach the Celestial Gate?" he replied, "As other people do." He justified this conclusion by asserting, that he knew the Lord's will; that he was a very good liver, paying every one his own, praying, fasting, and giving alms; and that, in addition to all these things, he had left his own country for that to which he was now going. In the most friendly manner, Christian endeavoured to convince him that these things, however excellent in themselves, were not sufficient to procure him admission to the Celestial City, principally because he had neglected to come by the Wicket Gate, at the end of the way; and therefore

expressed his fear that, at the day of judgment, he would be placed amongst those of whom our Lord speaks, when he says, "He that entereth not in by the Door, into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." However much the Pilgrims might fear for him, he feared nothing himself. He reminded them, that they were utter strangers to him, and requested them to follow their own religion, leaving him to follow his. He reminded them also, that the Gate of which they had spoken was a great way from their country; so far indeed that it was a question whether or not its inhabitants even knew the way to it. Supposing, however, they did, it was quite unnecessary to go so far about, seeing they had a pleasant green lane, which led down to the road; and, being there, he hoped that at last all would be well. Grieved, but not surprised, at this declaration, the Pilgrims consulted apart with each other upon the propriety of still farther conversing with him. Aware, however, of the extent of his ignorance, and of the strength of his prejudice, they applied to him Solomon's declaration: "There is more hope of a fool than of him." They therefore concluded, that it would be best to pass on before him for a time, and afterward to reason with him, as he was able to bear it.

The importance of scriptural views of the way of salvation, as exhibited in the doctrines of the Gospel, has been already stated; and it

is to be regretted that, by many preachers, they are so softened down, as to be rendered acceptable to those who are ignorant of their tendency, and strangers to their power. Among them may be reckoned the total depravity of our nature, the deceitfulness of our hearts, and the enmity of our minds to God. Ignorance had been a good liver, had paid every one his own, had fasted, prayed, given alms, and had left the world for a profession of the Gospel. These should be regarded as the effects of the Gospel, instead of the procuring causes of its blessings. However excellent in themselves, they are still within the compass of the natural mind, leaving the great consideration of man's state, as a sinner before God, untouched; and, if admitted as a ground of hope, rendering nugatory the righteousness, sufferings, and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. For, supposing these things to be all that are necessary to salvation, then it is impossible to conceive of any adequate cause for the incarnation of the Son of God, or any need that man can have of him as a Saviour. I am aware that one great cause of the rejection of the doctrines in question is to be found in the pride of the human heart, unwilling as it is to think ill of itself; and perhaps fearful that, the worse it is found, the farther it will be removed from its hopes and expectations of salvation. This is a dangerous, and sometimes a fatal mistake. It is withholding the symptoms of a dangerous disease from the physician, lest

his prescription should be disliked. It is a refusal to submit to the probe, because of the pain it will give. For only upon the principle of man's departure from God, the spiritual diseases of which he is the subject, and the danger to which he is exposed, will the Gospel be cordially received, and all its mighty effects become visible, in the renewing of the heart, and in the consistency of the life. The judgment of the Saviour was, that the whole need not a physician, but those who are sick. He therefore did not "come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." So far from the dignity of man being a scriptural term or sentiment, we find that he is uniformly spoken of as the subject of a moral disease, which nothing but the blood of a crucified Saviour can cure; that he is under the sentence of a condemnation, from the execution of which nothing but the exertion of Omnipotence can save him; and that he is the victim of a depravity, which a change of heart alone can remove. We shall therefore find that, in proportion as man is made sensible of this his condition, will he prize the salvation of the Gospel, at once renouncing every hope of salvation which can proceed from the goodness of his heart, the consistency of his life, and the excellency of his disposition. He will see the exact suitability of that Gospel to his case, and be led to rejoice in the Saviour, as he becomes acquainted with his power and his willingness to save. He will neither be

afraid of feeling his unworthiness, nor of acknowledging it before God; he will gladly part with his own righteousness for the righteousness of Christ; he will see that, if saved, it must be as "a debtor to mercy alone;" and all the praise, and all the glory, of that salvation, he will give to God. Now mark the effect of this. He will regard sin with abhorrence, as being offensive to God, and injurious to his soul. He will therefore avoid the paths which lead to it; or, if by temptation drawn aside, he will humbly acknowledge it before God, and plead his promises of forgiveness. He will pray for grace and strength that he may be more circumspect for the future; and will feel himself bound to warn others against that which has broken his own peace, and dishonoured his profession of the Gospel. Nor is this all; he finds, in his pardon for the past, the strongest motives for glorifying God; and, under their influence, consecrates to his service his time and his talents. He remembers that all he is, and all he hopes to be, flows from the goodness of God; and he considers his services in the light of a practical acknowledgment of that goodness, giving to Him the entire and the unreserved praise of his salvation. Place by the side of this view of the way of salvation, the native goodness of the human heart, and the moral excellencies of the unrenewed mind, and the moral duties of which so many make saviours; compare them both with the word of God, and then, judge

which of them brings the greatest glory to Him, and most effectually secures the salvation of man. For a time we must leave the discussion of this momentous subject, for the purpose of accompanying the pilgrims on their journey.

They had left Ignorance but a little way behind them, when they came to a dark lane. Here they met a man whom seven devils had bound with as many strong cords, and who were carrying him to the hole they had seen in the side of the hill. The Pilgrims trembled at what they saw, nor were their fears removed, until, looking back, they saw that it was *Turn-away;* that he lately lived in the town of *Apostacy;* and that upon his back was written, *Wanton Professor, and Damnable Apostate!* The appearance of this man brought to Christian's recollection a circumstance which occurred to *Little-faith,* a good man, once dwelling in the town of *Sincere.* Before, however, we attend to this circumstance, it will be profitable to contemplate the character of Turn-away, at the time the Pilgrims saw him. From Christianity itself there can be no apostates,—from a profession of it there may. Our Lord, in addressing his Father, said, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in my name; those whom thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the Scripture

might be fulfilled." That the children of God backslide in heart, and too often in life, will be readily admitted; that they are made to feel the evil of it is equally true; but that they are left to the final consequences of apostacy is impossible, seeing the Saviour declares that they shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck them out of his hands. When, therefore, a man, after a profession of religion, turns reprobate, or persecutor, herds with the wicked, casts off all fear of God, and lives and dies in this state,—although his *profession*, before this, had been so consistent as to excite no suspicion as to its sincerity, yet he proves himself to be of that number, spoken of by John, who went from the disciples of the Lord, because they were not of them.

The character of an apostate, however long it may have been in forming, is not long in discovering itself; its marks gradually appearing, as the disguise it assumed is removed. Among these marks will be found a *domineering, restless spirit.* Determined to lead or drive, rather than to follow, every measure he proposes must be adopted, however much it may affect the peace of the church, or wound the minds of those who would make every sacrifice, and endure every evil, rather than the cause of God should suffer. It however becomes necessary to make a stand against the plans which are formed for the aggrandizement of usurped power. The wisdom and the piety of the

church are arrayed against them, and prove successful. Mortified with disappointment, the apostate is compelled to retire. Like Lucifer of old, he draws after him the unthinking, or the unprincipled, and too frequently enlists under the banners of those who, by their lives and their conversation, prove themselves enemies to God and to his people. Thus, for a time, he is permitted to annoy, to harass, and distress those whom he once called his friends, with whom he appeared before God in public worship, and whom he repeatedly declared were amongst the excellent of the earth. Solemnly do I declare that no believer in Christ Jesus can be guilty of such conduct as this. In the best regulated Christian societies misunderstandings may arise, and painful feelings be excited. These may increase, until the supposed injured party may withdraw. This painful act will at once try the nature of his spirit, and the sincerity of his profession. If the one be under the influence of the Gospel, and the other be formed according to its precepts, he will mourn over the breach which the enemy has thus made; he will, in retirement, pray that it may be healed; he will speak well, not ill, of those with whom he has differed; he will reject, with a Christian firmness, the interference of the world, and still consider himself identified with the most holy cause of God, and still rejoice in its prosperity. With his mind still open to the voice of truth, and to the convictions of reason,

he will be ready to yield to both, and again to unite himself with those, whom, however much he may have differed with, he has neither hated nor injured. Contrast these characters, and the difference of their spirits will soon be perceived.

A second mark of apostacy will be seen, in a *refusal to submit to the opinion of the church, and the authority of the Scriptures, in matters of discipline.* It is as much the business of a Christian society to notice irregularities of conduct, as it is to open its arms for the reception of all who come in the name, and in the fear of the Lord. Instances, however, have occurred, wherein the offender has refused to submit to this notice; and who, after repeated entreaties to abstain from the practices which caused the offence, and after affectionate warnings that a repetition could not be borne with, has been compelled to withdraw, or has been expelled. Here again the influences of divine grace, or the spirit of apostacy, have been displayed. In the former instance, that which neither entreaties nor warnings could effect, the loss of church privileges has. The offender has been brought to see and feel the error and the danger of his conduct, has been made the subject of a repentance never to be repented of, and has been cordially welcomed back to his Christian privileges. In the latter instance, the separation has only hardened the offender, as it has released him from what he considered the trammels of the church; and, left for a time to his

dearly purchased freedom, he soon becomes the slave of those vices which caused his expulsion; and, increasing in hardihood and guilt, he at length reaches that stage of iniquity, at which "Wanton Professor," and "Damnable Apostate," are written upon his back!

While these are some of the marks of apostacy, we shall do well to examine the *causes* which frequently produce them. Among the principal of these, will be found,—*the writings or preaching of those who have left the simplicity of the Gospel for errors, destructive to the soul, and dishonouring to God,*—men, the peculiarities of whose creed are to be found only in the wanderings of the imagination, and supported only by passages of Scripture, forced from their dependance upon the word of God as a whole, and laid as a foundation for error. Such is the hypothesis which robs the Saviour of his essential glory, his sacrifice of its virtue, his blood of its efficacy, and denies the application of his whole work, of doing and of suffering, to the lost and perishing sons of men,—which leaves man to all the dreariness of the hour of death, and to all the solemnities of a judgment-day, and to all the events of eternity, without any real interest in *Him* who is able to save to the uttermost,—which bends the Scriptures to the reason of its advocates, instead of their reason to the Scriptures,—and which, by rejecting every thing the human mind cannot comprehend, deprives faith of every oppor-

tunity of exerting its power, and of receiving, as from God, those mysteries which angels desire to look into. Such, also, is the tendency of those sentiments, the professors of which build their hopes of salvation upon the secret purposes of God, instead of his revealed will; who, with a bold and presuming hand, strive to rend the veil which He has thrown over them, —who pass a final judgment upon all but themselves, and sentence to eternal perdition all who dare to differ from them, or who presume to call in question the infallibility of their decisions, — men who have charged upon the Father of mercies a decree of reprobation, which has consigned millions of the human race to hell before they were born,—and who have included in that decree ten thousand times ten thousand infants, who died upon their mother's laps, having done neither good nor evil! Let not the world imagine this to be *Calvinism*, or that Christians, bearing the name, hold sentiments accursed as these are. They believe that God is as merciful as he is just; that man, as a rational and an accountable creature, is dealt with as such by God; that he is the subject of motives, which are proposed to him, with every assurance of grace and strength sufficient to follow them to their consequences, in a state of everlasting felicity; and that, disregarding the one, and rejecting the other, his guilt and his condemnation must rest upon his own head, while God, through

eternity, will remain holy, just, and good. If asked how the above sentiments lead to apostacy, I answer, Because they convey to the mind those representations of God, which are neither to be found in his word, nor in the exercise of enlightened reason. When, therefore, it is said that *this* is part of Christianity, many, who have been brought up in a profession of the Gospel, avail themselves of this representation to reject it altogether: I answer, because, upon such representations as these, infidelity has laid hold; and, publicly exhibiting them as the essential truths of the Gospel, has cautioned the world against them. As in a former case, so in this, I may be charged with undue severity; but I beseech those who are about to bring the charge to pause, and reflect upon the tendency of such sentiments as have been adverted to in the experience of those who hold them. Did they merely affect the personal property, or the health, or even the lives, of those who become the victims of them, then might the grave, and a blissful eternity, obliterate every painful recollection, and still leave the soul in possession of all its peace, and of all its joys. But when the value of the soul is duly estimated, and the shortness of human life duly considered, and the impossibility of returning to the world after death remembered, the destructive tendency of these sentiments will become apparent, and the severity with which they have been treated be justified. I shall therefore be forgiven if I

say that, were the talent, and the power, and the influence of the world, bound in one common league, and sworn to their advancement, —nay, more than all this, were an angel from heaven to appear for the purpose of justifying them, I would reply to all in the language of the apostle, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed!"

We must return to Christian's account of Little-faith, who, as we have already heard, dwelt in the town of *Sincere;* and who, as a pilgrim, had formerly passed by the place near which they then were. To use Bunyan's expression, "the thing was this:" He commenced his journey with a certificate, and a quantity of jewels, which he durst not part with; a bag of silver, with which to purchase food by the way; and a determination, if possible, to reach the Celestial City. He went on peaceably until he came to a place called *Broad-Way-Gate,* at the entrance of *Dead-Man's-Lane,* so called because of the many murders committed upon that spot. With this circumstance he was probably unacquainted, or he would not, as he did, have sat down and slept. About the time of his awaking, three sturdy rogues, whose names were, *Faint-heart, Mistrust,* and *Guilt* (three brothers), came galloping up to him, and, with threatening language, bid him to stand. Little-faith was too much alarmed

either to fight or to flee. His money was demanded; but, as he made no haste to deliver it, Mistrust thrust his hand into his pocket, and notwithstanding his cry of "Thieves! Thieves!" succeeded in taking from him his bag of silver. He had scarcely done this, when Guilt struck Little-faith a violent blow on the head, which brought him bleeding to the ground; where for a considerable time he lay, the robbers standing by, and looking on. They at length heard some one coming towards the spot; and, fearing that it might be *Great-grace*, an inhabitant of the *City* of *Good Confidence*, they fled, leaving the robbed and wounded man to shift for himself. Reviving after a time, he got up, and continued his journey, having still his certificate and his jewels, which, being secreted about him, did not fall into the hands of the robbers.

The design of this interesting narrative is, to show the dangers to which believers are exposed, from the weakness or from the smallness of their faith,—the enemies to which they are exposed,—and the manner of their treatment, when in their power; while the spot upon which the robbery was committed, points out the time when most liable to be thus attacked; namely, soon after the commencement of their pilgrimage. It should be remembered that, however little this man's faith was, it was genuine; that he was therefore a sincere professor of the Gospel, and earnest in his endeavours to reach the Celestial City. His certificate appears to have corre-

sponded with the Roll which Christian received at the foot of the cross, bearing the seal of the Holy Spirit, and which testified to the reality of that change which had passed upon his soul. His jewels were the various and saving operations of divine grace, of which he could not be deprived; while his silver, or spending-money, was the comforts arising from them, and which were intended for his support by the way; thus showing that, however great may be the dangers to which the people of God are exposed, and however heavy their losses of comfort, their eternal interests are safe in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that, while those whose faith is small eventually reach heaven, they lose much of that enjoyment on the road which stronger believers are the subjects of. It is true that no man can give himself faith. It is also true that God has appointed certain means, in the use of which we are promised that an increase of it shall be granted; but, neglecting those means, we have no right to calculate upon it. We are commanded to grow in grace and the knowledge of the Saviour. We are enjoined to give all diligence, adding to our faith virtue, to our virtue knowledge, to our knowledge temperance, to our temperance patience, to our patience godliness, to our godliness brotherly kindness, and to our brotherly kindness charity. To suppose that, after this command, and this injunction, there are no advances to be made in the divine life, is at once to contradict Scripture,

and to oppose reason. I make these remarks, because there is a sentiment abroad, which, as it is received, leads to this conclusion, that in the perfection of the Redeemer's righteousness, man is so complete as to preclude the necessity of his own striving, for an advancement in that state of grace to which he is called by the mercy, and in which he is kept by the power, of God; forgetful that one great design of this grace, is not that he may have a title to heaven, but that he may be in a state of progressive preparation for it;—forgetful, too, that God has so intimately blended our comforts with our obedience that neglect of the one incurs the forfeiture of the other.

Faint-heart, Mistrust, and Guilt, speak, by their names, for themselves. They are the states of mind into which Little-faith falls, and which constantly rob him of his comfort. That they may be guarded against is evident from the reasoning already advanced, and from their dreading the approach of Great-grace. Let us inquire into the means whereby they gain strength sufficient to distress and injure the believer. They gain strength from partial or distorted views of the plan of salvation. The soul, alive to the importance of eternity, and to its liability to mistake, regards with alarm the threatenings and judgments recorded in the word of God; and, feeling increasingly the evil of sin, begins most seriously to make an application of these threats and judgments to its own

case. Hence the most fearful passages of the word of God are taken from their connexion, are repeatedly dwelt upon, and produce that degree of fear in the soul which lays it open to the attacks of Faint-heart. Mistrust immediately follows; and, as the mind contemplates the encouragements of the word of God, it directly suggests, "These are not for you, but for the saints of the Lord,—for the excellent of the earth,—for those whom God delights to honour! Compare yourself with them!—mark their devotedness to God, and contrast it with your indifference. Listen to the description of *their* enjoyments, and try your own experience by it. Do not deceive yourself with the supposition that you can be a child of God, while fear presses so hard upon your mind. Remember that perfect love casts out fear." It is now that conscious guilt and unworthiness rush like an armed man upon the mind, and reduce it to the condition of Little-faith, when bleeding at the feet of the robbers.

It has been already said that these robbers may be guarded against. It may also be added, that perseverance will so far subdue them, that much of their power to harm the believer may be taken from them. *Clear and consistent views of the plan of salvation* will contribute towards this purpose. The merciful design of God in the Gospel is to save, not to destroy. Hence our Lord says, that "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that through

him it might be saved." Upon this declaration, as upon an immoveable basis, the Gospel rests, and towards this we should constantly look. Let, then, the tried believer examine those passages of Scripture which reveal the threats of God, and he will there find a description of character, the most remote from his own. Let him, for example, take that solemn declaration from the Revelations, wherein it is said, that "the fearful and the unbelieving," with many others, "shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone,"—and then let him ask the nature of that fear, and the quality of that unbelief, which connects with destruction, and see whether they will apply to him. He will soon discover that it is the fear of man, not the fear of God; and that, under its influence, men have denied God, have followed the evil courses of the world, have often laughed at every thing sacred, and not unfrequently persecuted his church, and strove against his cause,—that the unbelief referred to has been cherished, with all its malignancy, and has led to the most open and profligate conduct,—that they have both been persisted in, without being followed by that repentance which never can be repented of,—that they have gained strength by indulgence, and have finally led to that perdition of which sinners are repeatedly warned. Contrasted with this, the sincere believer is enabled to appeal to the Searcher of hearts, for the sincerity of that faith, and of that love, which he

sometimes hopes he is the subject of, and which he desires may increase. He lives in no acknowledged sin, nor indulges in any wilful neglect. To him the service of God is perfect freedom, and the nearest wish of his heart is, that he may find acceptance with Him, through the righteousness and death of a crucified Saviour, into whose hands he has commended his soul,—for whose glory he wishes to live,—and interested in whose salvation he wishes to die. If this indeed be the state of his soul, then are his fears groundless. Sentiments such as these, evidenced by a life regulated according to the precepts of the Gospel, can only proceed from that work of grace which God has promised to crown with glory. And let him remember, for his comfort, that, through the very state of mind he is now the subject of, thousands have passed to the fulness of that joy which is in the presence of God, and to those pleasures which, through eternity, will remain at his right-hand.

Frequent intercourse with the people of God will convince him, that he does not alone suffer from the effects of Little-faith. He will find that there is much more of his own state of mind to be discovered in the experience of many whom he admires, than he was at first aware of. He will hear them make similar complaints, and express similar doubts, as to the sincerity of their profession, until, at length, he wonders at the coincidence of feeling he finds subsisting between himself and them; and as he never

doubted of their safety, he will be enabled to draw comfort from the reflection, that he has found some, the exercises of whose minds have been as painful and as long continued as his own. He will also, by degrees, discover wherein consists the essential difference between his own, and the experience of the mere professor of the Gospel.

Returning to the Pilgrims, we find them engaged in a conversation upon the conduct of Little-faith after his robbery. His loss he long and severely felt. Deprived of the means of subsistence while on his journey, he was often reduced to great straits, being sometimes forced to beg. The particulars of his misfortune, he detailed to nearly all he met. He, however, drew consolation from the recollection, that he still possessed his jewels, and his certificate, and, with both, the integrity of his character. It excited the surprise of Hopeful, that Little-faith had not followed the example of Esau, who, for a morsel of meat, sold his birthright. This surprise afforded Christian an opportunity of contrasting their characters, and of pointing out the essential difference between them. The particulars of which must be reserved for the ensuing Lecture.

LECTURE XVI.

Contrast between Esau and Little-faith—Description of the Flatterer—The Pilgrims taken in his Net.

One great effect produced by the afflictions and trials of life, is the disclosure of a man's real character. Prosperity, as a veil, is often thrown over it; and it not unfrequently keeps a man in ignorance of himself, and causes him to think that he possesses a fortitude which has never been tried, and a resignation which has never yet been called for. It is not unusual for him, while sitting in judgment upon others, to declare that he would not have been guilty of those things for which he condemns them, or that he would have manifested more prudence than they have exercised. Well, therefore, might our Lord say, "First take out the beam that is in thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to take out the mote that is in thy brother's eye." While, however, trials and afflictions discover the weakness of human nature, they also prove the strength of those principles which, implanted in the soul by the Spirit of God, are more deeply rooted by the very storms which are raised for their destruction. The reverse of all this has often been adverted to in the preceding Lectures, and illustrated by the conduct of those who, after the profession of the Gospel, have fallen away, never to return to it.

The character of Esau is an important one. We have endeavoured to show its application to those persons who, having been brought up in the fear of the Lord, afterward give themselves up to the pleasures of the world; and, forsaking the advice of their early days, follow that which leads to present and to future misery. The part of his conduct which we are now called to the consideration of, is when, in the moment of his distress, he exclaimed, "Behold, I am at the point to die, and what profit shall this birthright do to me?"

It should be remembered that Esau and Jacob were twin brothers, and that, before their birth, the Lord had declared that the elder should serve the younger. Of their early days but little account is given, Jacob being merely described as a plain man, dwelling in tents, and Esau as a cunning hunter, fond of the field. It is probable that, after a day's severe exercise, he returned in the evening so faint as to lead him to suppose he was near death; and, seeing his brother engaged in preparing a kind of food, called "red pottage," he expressed a wish to partake of it. Jacob, in reply, said, "Sell me this day thy birthright." Esau, concluding that he was near death, and setting but little value on what his brother sought to obtain, agreed to his proposal, confirmed by oath his right to it, and received in exchange the pottage, for which he thus bartered an important privilege. Refreshed by the food he had taken, he rose up,

and went away, not merely unconcerned for the loss he had sustained, but despising that upon which he should have set the highest value. It must not be concealed that the conduct of Jacob in this instance, as well as in fraudulently obtaining his father's blessing, was highly reprehensible. It was any thing but a brotherly act, to make the terms of assistance, to an apparently dying man, the surrender of an invaluable blessing, and will account for much of that resentment he so justly dreaded from Esau. I am aware that it may be asked, Was not Jacob's success according to the prediction and purpose of God? I answer, Yes; but the means which Jacob employed to obtain it were of that description which cannot be justified. It may be in the purposes of God to raise a poor man from obscurity to wealth and notice, but he must be a most unprincipled man who will resort to fraudulent practices with a view to his advancement in life. It was among the purposes of God to save the world by the death of his Son: but it was by the unrestrained workings of human depravity that his death was accomplished. It is, therefore, of considerable importance that we be upon our guard against that most unscriptural sentiment, too often acted upon,—that the end sanctifies the means.

While we readily admit the distress of Esau, and that his birthright, according to his apprehensions, would be of little, if of any, value to him, it should be remembered that neither

of these causes was a sufficient justification of his conduct. The birthright was a spiritual, as well as a natural, privilege,—including the blessing of God, as well as the favour of man; and, but for Esau's folly and wickedness, his name would have occupied the place of Jacob's, in the line of ancestors, from whom the Saviour, according to natural descent, came. It was therefore a virtual rejection of all interest in him, and that which caused the apostle to apply the word "profane" to his character. It was a voluntary separating of himself from the family of God, for the purpose of being identified with the Heathen families of the earth; and accordingly, when forty years of age, we find him, to the grief of his parents, marrying into the families of Beeri and Elon, both of them Hittites, and Heathens. The value of a blessing is best proved by the pains we take to gain and to keep it. What then was the consideration which Esau received for his? It was the momentary gratification of appetite,—the apostle says, "one morsel of meat." Had the poverty of Isaac and Rebecca been so great that the meal which Jacob was preparing was the last the house afforded, or had the food been so necessary to his recovery that no other kind would have answered the same purpose, however we might have censured his haste and indifference, it would have lessened his criminality. Nothing, however, of this kind is found in the scriptural account of the transaction; and the

only conclusion we can come to is that which has been already stated, namely, that, for a momentary gratification of his appetite, he parted with a blessing, which he never recovered, although he afterward "sought it with tears." Thus have we seen men already in the possession of great and important blessings, by one fatal act of indiscretion, destroy their present, and all their future expectations of happiness. In one fatal night, at the gambling-table, have sunk as into a gulf, the produce of years of application to business, reducing to want and beggary an almost heart-broken wife, and a family of helpless children. Sometimes one act of fraud has paved the way for a series of them, until every principle of integrity has been immolated; and, amongst the refuse of society, has the subject of them closed a polluted and a miserable existence. In other instances, one departure from the path of virtue has led to the deep ditch of sensuality, from the bottom of which the groans of the victim have been heard, until the just judgments of God, like an overwhelming flood, have swept him into the lake which burns with inextinguishable fire and brimstone. O that the young, when tempted to part with their birthrights,—of parental example and advice,—of integrity and virtue,—of the fear of the Lord, and of their hopes of salvation,—would pause,—would remember the consequences of yielding;—and then, kneeling before God, ask, "How shall I do this wickedness, and

sin against *Thee?*" O that they would remember the cries and tears of Esau, when he exclaimed, "Bless me, even me also, O my father!" but when (to use the language of the apostle) "he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

It was under circumstances more distressing than those which led to Esau's apostacy that the sincerity of Little-faith was discovered. Although robbed and wounded, he manifested no desire to abandon his profession, or to give up his hopes of reaching the Celestial City. With no one to help, or even to encourage him, he no sooner recovered from the effects of the blow he had received, than, rising from the ground, he, without a moment's hesitation, resumed his journey. Deprived of many of those comforts which other believers enjoyed, he patiently went forward, knowing that the peace and joy laid up for him at the end of his journey, would more than compensate for the loss he had sustained, or the sufferings he would have to endure; remembering, too, that he still possessed those treasures which, although he could not now enjoy, were ready to be produced whenever the Lord should require them. His faith, though little, was sincere; his hopes, though accompanied with despondency, were scriptural; and his confidence, though damped, was not destroyed. Thus does Little-faith prove the strength of those principles, and the purity of

those motives, which uniformly flow from vital Christianity.

It has often been said that it is a hard thing to be a Christian. The patience and perseverance of Little-faith, and the difficulties and dangers of the pilgrims, abundantly confirm this declaration. Under all the disadvantages of poverty, and under all the evils of persecution, and with the soul in a state of distress, arising out of a natural irritability of temper, we have seen believers go on from year to year, dreading nothing so much as their being left to fall, and bring a reproach upon the cause of God. Could we have listened to their prayers, or seen their tears, we should have concluded that all their temporal afflictions were regarded with indifference, when compared with their concern for their souls' salvation; and that, notwithstanding the many discouragements they had hitherto met with, and still calculated upon, their solemn determination was to go forward, as God might be pleased to afford them strength and grace. It has been under such circumstances as these that they have felt and expressed their most unqualified resignation to his will, under the same description of trials which have excited the malevolent passions of the unrenewed mind, and caused the subjects of them to ask, what they had ever done against God to cause their infliction. It has been under such circumstances that the believer has retained his integrity, and has dared all the evils of poverty and

of persecution, rather than forsake that cause in which was bound up the salvation of his soul; choosing rather, like Moses, to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. It has been under such circumstances that, gradually made acquainted with the evil of sin, with the plague of their hearts, and with the natural defects of their tempers and of their dispositions, these discoveries have become occasions for more earnest and fervent prayer to God for forgiveness, and for the constant application of that blood which cleanseth from all sin; thus proving that, however small their portion of faith may have been, still it was of that quality which, working by love to God and to his ways, has led to present peace and to future salvation; and that, although fear, mistrust, and guilt, have, by turns, invaded their peace, and weakened the powers of their souls, and threatened them with final destruction, yet, relying upon the promise, the power, and the goodness of God, they have been enabled to exclaim, "Greater is God, who is for us, than all the foes who can be against us."

In the course of the conversation between Christian and Hopeful, and which has given rise to these remarks, we find a description of the power which Faint-heart, Mistrust, and Guilt possess; and which they have uniformly exercised over the people of God, as often as they have been permitted. David, Mordecai,

Hezekiah, and Peter, were successively attacked by them; and, although eventually conquerors, yet were not their victories gained without their being made to acknowledge, that it was not by might, nor by power, but by and through the Spirit of the Lord. Christian himself remembered well the part they took with Apollyon, in his memorable combat with him; and that, but for his shield of faith, and his sword of the Spirit, he would have obtained the victory over him. It would be a mark of presumption for us to despise them. An enemy despised has not unfrequently been found a formidable and a fatal one. Our security lies in our resistance, not in our own strength, but in the strength of the Lord. The only weapons available against them are faith and prayer. And should it be answered, True, but their operations are chiefly directed against those who have but little of the one, and who are often discouraged in the other, I would refer to the prayer of the disciples: "Lord, increase our faith;" and to the declaration of our Lord, "That men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

Christian's account of Great-grace is short, but from it we shall readily perceive that it is descriptive of a state of mind the very reverse of Little-faith, and that it is produced by those manifestations of the divine presence which enable the believer to rejoice in the assurance that God is with him. Before these manifestations, Faint-heart, Mistrust, and Guilt cannot

stand. Bunyan has therefore described him as the king's champion. It is a state of mind which often succeeds some of the most painful, yet not the less profitable, discoveries of our unworthiness and guilt, as sinners; so that while, on the one hand, we are humbled before God, on the other, we are not left to the consequences of despair. While it does this, it also furnishes the weak and the fearful believer with an evidence that God has not forsaken him, and that, through his grace, he shall at length reach the end of his journey.

The conversation between Christian and Hopeful had scarcely closed, when they found a road, branching into and lying by the side of the one they were upon. They were therefore compelled to pause, and consider which of them they should take. While thus considering, they saw a black man, clothed in a very light dress, who, coming up to them, asked why they stood there? They answered they were going to the Celestial City, but knew not which of the two ways before them to take. He requested them to follow him, inasmuch as he was going to the same place. This they did, but discovered that the road they were on gradually deviated from that which they ought to have kept, until, at length, their faces were turned from the city which they were desirous of reaching. They had scarcely made this discovery when they found themselves entangled in a net. At the same moment the white robe fell from their guide,

and they perceived that he was the Flatterer, against whom they had been warned. Their distress was great; it was another instance of their folly, in neglecting the advice which had been given; Christian now remembering the caution of the Shepherds, and Hopeful that they had received a note of the way, which, had they consulted, they would have discovered the road they should have taken, and thus been saved from the snare of the Flatterer.

By the Flatterer, false and dangerous teachers of religion are intended. They are men who hide the blackness and deformity of human nature under the white robe of an outward profession, and who endeavour to show that the observance of ordinances is sufficient for all the purposes of salvation. Of old, they were men who taught that unless Christians were circumcised they could not be saved; and who endeavoured to draw them from the fulness and freeness of the Gospel, to the contraction and bondage of the law. From the speciousness of their reasoning, and from their apparent solicitude for the honour of the law, the apostle points out the danger of attending to them: while, from the iniquity of their own conduct, and the destruction to which their teaching leads, he calls them "ministers of Satan," transformed in appearance to angels of light; and shows that, however they might lay claim to the character of apostles, they carried about with them those marks of falsehood and wicked-

ness which should cause believers to shun their example and their advice.

In the present, as in Bunyan's days, there is a generation of teachers, who, wise above that which is written, and who imagining that a simple belief of the Gospel is insufficient for the purposes of salvation, have endeavoured to bring in human tests, to which they would submit the mighty workings of God's Spirit; and, although the life be consistent, and the hopes of salvation be scriptural, they tell those who manifest this consistency that they cannot enter the kingdom of God, unless they will submit their experience to their scrutiny. It may be that peculiar views of passages of Scripture, or of the ordinances of Christianity, form the standard, to which the pious and prudent must conform, ere they can, in the opinion of their judges, be saved; and thus, making no allowances for the fallibility of human judgment, nor for the weakness of human intellect, nor for all the various ways by which the Holy Spirit carries on his great work in the soul of man, they condemn to perdition all who cannot pronounce the Shibboleth of their party. And, instead of meekly instructing those who differ from them, and thus proving how influential the Gospel has been upon their tempers and their tongues, they make it their business to traduce the characters of those who give to every man that which they ask for themselves—the liberty of private judgment in matters pertaining to

their soul's salvation. Let us point out some of the marks of these *False Apostles*, and describe the *Net* which they spread for the followers of the Saviour.

One of the first of these marks is *a spirit of proselytism*. No matter how upright the former conduct has been, nor how near to God they have hitherto lived, — nothing can satisfy the minds of these apostles but the adoption of sentiments which, no way essential to salvation, have scarcely been noticed by those who, if possible, are to be made the victims of them. Stationing themselves, therefore, at that part of the road where the path of error has been laid by the side of the path of truth; or, in other words, taking advantage of those states of mind in which doubts arise, and which would soon give place to prayer and patience, they have offered to guide into a clearer knowledge of the way of salvation,—to remove, as by authority from heaven, these doubts and fears, — and infallibly to conduct to present peace and to future happiness. From such a spirit as this the faithful minister of the Gospel will turn with abhorrence. He will remember that it was the very spirit which characterized the Pharisees of old, who compassed sea and land to make one proselyte; and that the design of his mission is to bring into the kingdom of Christ those who, by wicked works, are far from it, and not to divide those who are already there.

A spirit of railing is another mark of a false apostle. Did Paul, in the execution of his great work, warn his converts against the preaching of Apollos or Cephas? I knew a minister in London, who declared that, after the death of the late venerable Romaine, he was unable to find out a place where he could hear a Gospel sermon, and who denounced the ministers of that metropolis, with scarcely one exception, as "dumb dogs," unable to bark! Solemnly would I ask, Is this the design of the Gospel? And can they be regarded as the ambassadors of peace, who endeavour to banish from their recollection the song of the angels, after announcing the Redeemer's birth: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men?" In the word of God, we are commanded to live in peace with all men, to pray for our enemies, and to return blessings for cursing. How deeply, then, is it to be regretted, that men, sustaining the ministerial character, should so far invert this order as to excite unholy feelings against those preachers who have never willingly offended them; but who, in the discharge of those duties they owe to God, endeavour to "do good to all, especially to the household of faith." Never is the pulpit more abused than when converted into a vehicle for slander; and never is the gospel ministry more degraded than when, through it, the peace of individuals is wounded; and never does a man sink so low as when he attacks

those who, from the nature of public worship, or from the absence of the parties, cannot answer for themselves.

Sentiments which dishonour God, and lead to destruction the souls of men, are infallible marks of a false apostle. God never yet sent to preach an uninstructed minister of the Christian religion. When, therefore, we hear a man contend for the goodness of the human heart, after God has declared it to be "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;"—when we hear the Saviour declared to be upon a level with his creatures, and are told to look to our good dispositions for peace, rather than to him;—when we are told to do the best we can for ourselves, and then to go to him for our deficiencies;—or, to sum up all in a few words, —when we are invited to depart from the simplicity of the Gospel, and to embrace the opinions of men opposed to it, we are forced upon the conclusion, that these men, however great may be their talents, and however great may be their success, are not the ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Upon the dangerous tendency of flattery itself a few remarks must suffice. It unduly elevates the mind, and causes the person who is unfortunate enough to be flattered to regard himself with a peculiar degree of complacency. It leads him to undervalue the esteem of those who possess the ability and the willingness to serve him; and to underrate the talents of all

whom he regards in the light of competitors. When this feeling of pride is excited in the mind, and brought to bear upon our state as sinners before God, it is impossible to say how destructive its operations may prove. Against it Paul warned Timothy, by showing him that it was the sin of the devil, and the procuring cause of his condemnation. It will lead a man to be proud of his attainments, and to despise those who are destitute of them. He will sometimes come before God as a claimant, rather than a supplicant. If grace be already in the soul, it will stop its growth; if it be not, it will prevent its entrance. To the young I would say, They are your best friends who will affectionately point out your errors, and show you how they are to be amended; while your greatest foes are those who, by flattery, would unduly elevate your minds.

The Net in which Christian and Hopeful were entangled, in consequence of following the Flatterer, allegorically conveys to our mind some sin from which they could not deliver themselves; nor is it at all unlikely that pride was the cause of it. A considerable time had elapsed since their last severe trial; they had received encouragement from the Shepherds, and had largely partaken of the enjoyments afforded by the Delectable Mountains; and they were engaged in close conversation, a few moments before they came to that spot from which they turned aside to follow the Flatterer. In the

course of that conversation, Hopeful expressed his surprise that Little-faith had not resisted the robbers, intimating that it would have been a fine opportunity for the display of his own courage. Christian, too, seemed not a little elevated with the recollection of his encounter with Apollyon. It was too favourable an opportunity to be lost by the enemy; the Flatterer appeared, and they were taken in his net.

LECTURE XVII.

The Pilgrims released from the Net by a Shining One—Description of Atheist—The Pilgrims enter upon the Enchanted Ground—Hopeful gives Christian an Account of his Conversion to God.

Did those who are in the habit of speaking lightly of sin know how dangerous are its consequences, they would readily admit the truth of Solomon's declaration, that fools only make it the subject of mockery. Thousands have gone to perdition, and thousands more are following them, under a full conviction of the destructive tendency of those habits which, in the first instance, might have been successfully resisted, but which, acquiring strength by indulgence, became at length interwoven with the constitution, and mocked every effort to eradicate them. I have recently read of a man,

so given up to drunkenness that, even in the last stage of a miserable existence, he would crawl from his bed to a distant part of the room, and, seizing such spirits as were left within his reach, would drink until he could scarcely reach the bed, from which he was soon to be called into the presence of a just and holy God. It is not so much the peculiar sin I am speaking of, as it is the habit of sinning, into which the soul sinks, and which, like a net, incloses it around. With some men, it is the love of money, which, in their opinion, is as necessary to their existence as the blood in their veins, and which they would almost as soon part with. With others it is the pursuit of pleasure, which, when the means of gratification are withheld, never to be restored, is cherished in the memory, to the exclusion of those considerations which the near approach of death might be supposed to force upon the attention.

These remarks will fearfully apply to those habits of indifference of which too many are the subjects. Satisfied that they are living in no outward immoralities, that they are discharging the duties of their stations, and that, in the sight of man, their character and conduct are unimpeachable, they give themselves but little, if any, concern as to the state of their souls; and, consequently, regard the declaration of our Lord, "Ye must be born again," as words which, in no sense, can apply to them. While under the influence of this indifference, should

any person venture to suggest a doubt of the safety of their state before God, and from this argue the necessity of an internal work of divine grace, he would run considerable risk of being regarded as one who felt anxious to convert them to opinions the necessity of which they had never yet seen. Nor is this all: They would manifest considerable impatience at the very suspicion, that a faith and practice, so long held, and so much trusted to, should be considered as defective, and hazardous to their eternal welfare. They would therefore endeavour to guard every avenue to the soul, and, by every means in their power, resist the entrance of that word which alone can impart light and peace. Held thus in the net of their own self-righteousness, and confirming each other in their opinions of the goodness of their hearts, nothing short of the exercise of Almighty power can open their eyes or effect their deliverance.

The time during which the Pilgrims lay in the net does not appear to have been of any great length. It is, however, more than probable that a considerable part of it was spent in prayer, scarcely an instance of deliverance occurring which has not been preceded by it, as well as accompanied with acknowledgments of that error which brought them into affliction. Thus, while the Pilgrims lay bewailing themselves, they saw coming towards them a *Shining One*, with a whip of small cord in his hand. Having reached the place of their confinement,

he inquired of them whence they came, and what they did there. In answer to these questions, they described the guide they had followed, until they were taken in his net. They were then informed that they had followed a false apostle, who had transformed himself into an angel of light. Having said this, he rent the net and released them. Commanding them to follow him, he made several more inquiries, the answers to which led them to see the folly of their conduct in neglecting the caution and advice of the Shepherds. By this time they had reached the spot where they had turned aside to follow the Flatterer. Here they were commanded to lie down; which having done, they received a severe correction, accompanied with these words, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous, therefore, and repent." Having done this, he directed them to go forwards, and to remember the remainder of the instructions they had received from the Shepherds. The Pilgrims thanked him for his kindness, and went softly along the right way.

Having already referred to the ministry of angels, it will here be unnecessary to enlarge that reference, for the purpose of proving the interest they take in the welfare of the heirs of salvation. We shall, however, do well to pause, for the purpose of inquiring into the nature of that deliverance we have just noticed, as well as the correction with which it was followed. It was probably effected by breaking the power

of that sin, in which, as in a net, they were confined. Say, for instance, that it was spiritual pride, arising out of their reflecting on the numbers they had left behind, and the difficulties they had overcome. To this would succeed a degree of carnal security, bringing them, for a time, under the power of some sin, from which they could not deliver themselves. It was at this time that the compassion of God was displayed, by his sending an angel for their deliverance. Having free access to their souls, he would, by his secret, but certain, operations, show them the sinfulness of this pride, and the snare into which it had brought them; then, bringing to their recollection the solemn obligations under which they were laid to use all the means of grace with which they were favoured, and to follow the instructions imparted by those means, he would strengthen their souls to a successful resistance against sin, and thus effect their liberation. This he would do in perfect subserviency to the Holy Spirit of God, to whom himself and the Pilgrims would give the praise. A considerable degree of sorrow and regret would follow this deliverance, occasioned by the recollection of their departure from the straight and narrow path. With humility would they acknowledge how much they deserved to suffer, and, as we have seen, thankfully declare, that at the Lord's hand they had received less than their iniquities deserved. The slowness of the pace at

which the Pilgrims went, after leaving the angel, is intended to show the caution with which the sincere believer moves, after those deliverances which God works for him.

The Pilgrims, still pressing forward, discovered, at a distance, a man coming towards them. Fearful that he might prove another flatterer, they regarded him with considerable caution, and found at length that he was an apostate professor of the Gospel, named *Atheist.* Upon the Pilgrims telling him that they were going to Mount Zion, he burst into a fit of laughter, and for which he accounted by exclaiming, "I laugh to see what ignorant persons you are, to take upon you so tedious a journey, and yet are like to have nothing but your travail for your pains;" declaring, at the same time, that there was no such place as that which they were seeking for. From his own account it appeared that, twenty years before his meeting with Christian and Hopeful, he had left his home and his country, for the purpose of commencing a pilgrimage to the Celestial City. Having, however, failed in his attempts to reach that place, he was in the act of returning to the country he came from, determined to enjoy its good things, and to leave a pilgrim's life to such men as those with whom he was now conversing. Neither the confident manner in which Atheist spoke, nor the intelligence which he communicated, made the least impression upon the Pilgrims. Convinced, by

what they had seen and heard, of their being in the way which would conduct them to the heavenly city, they could only pity the blindness and delusion of this wretched man, who, having turned his back upon the ways of God, was going to the world for that satisfaction which it has never yet afforded. To such a character may be applied the description which the apostle Jude gives of apostate professors: "Twice dead, plucked up by the roots."

If, upon the face of the earth, there can one man be found, more an object of pity than another, it is he of whom Bunyan speaks, under the name of Atheist. Surrounded by the most incontestable proofs of the existence of a first and moving Cause, he must reject the evidence of his senses, and do violence to the reasoning faculties of his soul, ere he can come to the conclusion that there is no God. He must do more than this: he must stifle the voice of his conscience, and dismiss from his mind every thought of an hereaffer; he must degrade himself beneath the brute that perishes, and involve himself in the most palpable contradictions, ere he can make up his mind that himself, and the creation by which he is surrounded, is the work of chance, rather than of design. It is more in practice than in theory that such men are to be found. By their actions, they may virtually deny their responsibility to God. By their love of sin, and by their indulgence in

it, they may prove how little impression the considerations of a judgment to come make upon their minds; while, by their boasting and blasphemy, they may show how far they have removedth emselves from God; but they know, too, that there are moments of fearful apprehension, in which their consciences, like spectres, arise and glare upon them, and point to the grave, and whisper — no, not whisper — but, in language that appals their souls, and shakes to the centre their strongest resolutions, they bid them prepare to meet a denied,—an insulted God! Let the death-chamber of Voltaire speak the horrors of its guilty master, when, sending for a Catholic priest, he declared that he died in the bosom of that church into the side and heart of whose founder he would have thrust the Roman spear, with a malice more deadly than that which guided the councils of the Sanhedrim, and with an aim as certain as that which opened a passage for the blood and water, which flowed for the salvation of a guilty world. Let the first and great article of his creed be known as far and as wide as these Lectures shall reach; that article which, as a watch-word, assured his disciples that the letters they received were from their master. To speak without ambiguity, it was usual for him to write in a corner of his confidential letters, "*Crush the wretch!*"—meaning the Saviour of sinners!!! Unwilling as I am to drag the loathsome remembrance of *Paine* from that

corruption to which, by the common consent of rational men, it has been consigned, still it is right that the young should know to what atheism tends. This man, then (if the name of man be not blasphemed by calling him one), after flying from the justice of his own country,—after promoting the horrors, and glorying in the triumphs, of the French revolution,—after aping his master Voltaire in wit, and endeavouring to outstep him in wickedness,—this Atheist, incrusted with guilt as with a leprosy, called, in his dying hour, upon the Saviour whom he had reviled; and, when asked, "Do you wish to believe in him?" answered, "I have no wish upon the subject." And closing his eyes, and casting forth his unclean spirit, he received the reward of his deeds, in the profoundest depth of hell.

I dare not make an apology for the discharge of a solemn duty. The character of an atheist is now before us; and, as a tree is best known by its fruits, so will the interests of religion be served, by showing the fruits of atheism,—by contrasting the dying horrors of these men with the peace, the joy, and the holy triumph of those, who, having loved the service and revered the name of God, die in the full assurance of a blissful immortality.

Bunyan's Atheist neither disturbed the minds of the Pilgrims, nor hindered them in their journey. They were too well convinced of the truths of the Gospel to be laughed out of them;

and too sensible of the importance of that journey to be turned aside from the prosecution of it. They were about entering upon the Enchanted Ground; and they remembered the caution, not to sleep upon it.

By the Enchanted Ground, one of two things may be understood; namely, the cessation of many of those trials which had hitherto marked their pilgrimage; or a state of worldly prosperity; either of which, unaccompanied by watchfulness and prayer, would prove dangerous to the peace of their souls. To guard, therefore, against sleep, or indifference to their spiritual state, was the design of the caution which they had received from the Shepherds. It was for this purpose that Christian proposed to his fellow-traveller, that he should describe the manner in which he was brought to a saving knowledge of the truths of the Gospel, as well as the subsequent dealings of God with his soul. One probable reason for the introduction of the narrative in this place is, to show that the Holy One of Israel has limited himself to no peculiar mode of operation, by which he is pleased to bring man to the knowledge of the truth. Christian was brought by the terrors of impending judgments to cry for that mercy which alone could save him from them. Faithful caught the alarm which drove Christian from the City of Destruction; and Hopeful was won to the cause of God by the fortitude with which the Pilgrims endured the evils of Vanity Fair.

It will also be perceived how varied was their experience, while passing through the same description of trials. Shame, and Adam the First, who so severely assaulted Faithful, were in no one instance suffered to molest Christian or Hopeful. The Valley of the Shadow of Death, so terrible to Christian, was, by the good providence of God, enlightened by the sun, during the time that Faithful passed through it; while the experience of Hopeful, in many instances, differed from both of them. It should not, however, be forgotten, that, however their trials varied, they all answered one great end; namely, to promote their best and eternal interests, by enabling them to go forward in that course the end of which was to be everlasting life.

At the request of Christian, Hopeful thus described the manner of his conversion to God. He was, as we have already heard, a native of Vanity Fair; and, like most of its inhabitants, soon contracted an inordinate desire for its gratifications. We are left to infer that his parents were without the fear of God before their eyes. To early neglect may be ascribed the formation of many of those vicious habits which have rendered miserable in time, and through eternity, those who have fallen their victims. To display, however, the sovereignty of divine grace, instances are recorded of many, who have been plucked as brands from the burning, and made subjects of that grace which accompanies salvation. Such was Hopeful. The early

part of his life was characterized by vices, injurious to society, and destructive to himself. Among these, he enumerates rioting, revelling, drinking, swearing, lying, uncleanness, sabbath-breaking, and every thing else calculated to destroy the peace of the soul here, and to drown it in perdition hereafter. Such was his state when Christian and Faithful entered Vanity Fair, and endured the cruel mockings of its frequenters. Some such motive as curiosity drew with the multitude Christian's present companion; and, for the first time, he heard from the lips of Faithful that the end of his wicked courses would be death, and that for them the wrath of God would fall upon the children of disobedience. For some time after this, Hopeful endeavoured to harden himself against whatever fears these declarations might create, unwilling to be made acquainted with the evil of sin, or to be alarmed with the threats of destruction that would follow it. He was at considerable pains to shake off every painful impression, and to close his eyes against the light of those convictions which now began to give considerable uneasiness. Sin was still sweet to him; his old companions clung with tenacity to his heart; and, although his horrors began so to increase as to cause him many fearful apprehensions, yet he knew not that this was one appointed means of bringing man to a knowledge of his guilty state before God. The distress of his soul was considerably increased by

many incidents, which, however simple in themselves, made the most alarming appeals to his conscience. If he met a pious man in the streets, he was forcibly reminded of the guilt of his own state. If he heard any one read the Bible, he felt conscious that he was condemned by it. If his head did but ache, he knew not but the pain might prove the harbinger of death. The sickness or death of any of his neighbours created dreadful forebodings in his mind; while the tolling of a bell seemed like warning him to judgment. Superadded to all these things, was the power which sin seemed to acquire, as if it gathered strength by the resistance made against it, and retained its hold in proportion to his desire to be separated from it.

He now entered into a determination to be delivered from this his enemy. He fled from his sinful companions, forsook his former evil practices. He commenced a course of religious duties, and thought that, by praying, reading, weeping for sin, and speaking truth to his neighbours, he should propitiate God, and bring peace into his soul. Here, however, he was mistaken; for, as he read his Bible, he discovered that his righteousness was insufficient to justify him before God, and that, supposing to the very letter he could discharge the duties he had imposed upon himself, he would still remain an unprofitable servant. From these discoveries he saw the impossibility of being saved by any thing that he could do or suffer; and thus, for

a considerable time, he remained in a state of uncertainty, convinced of his danger, but knowing not how to escape from it. After much hesitation, he determined to open his mind to Faithful, judging that, from his long experience in the ways of God, he would be able to remove some of the difficulties which appeared to lay in the way of his salvation. With considerable surprise, he heard from him, that, before he could be saved, he must obtain the righteousness of a man who had never sinned; that in this righteousness he must appear before God; and that, for the sake of him by whom it was wrought out, he must expect, in prayer, to be heard and answered. It was with difficulty that Hopeful could bring himself to understand the nature of this declaration; nor was it until, by degrees, he lost all dependance upon himself, that he was enabled to submit to the righteousness of Christ, and rely upon him, and upon him alone, for pardon and for salvation. A considerable time elapsed before he could come to the conclusion already stated, throughout which he applied for direction to Faithful, as to the means he should employ, in order that he might obtain so invaluable a blessing. It is hardly necessary to say that the person referred to by Faithful was the Lord Jesus Christ, and that the righteousness spoken of was the merits of his obedience, perfect in its nature, everlasting in its duration, and free for all who feel the need of it.

Notwithstanding this disclosure, it still was a

most important question, proposed by Hopeful, By what means could he, so great a sinner, be made a partaker of this righteousness? To this Faithful replied, that the Saviour himself had freely invited, to the participation of it, all,—no matter how great their former sins had been, nor how unworthy they felt themselves; that his word had gone forth, "Come unto me, *all* ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;"—and that heaven and earth must pass away, before that word should fail. Still more to encourage him, Faithful said that God had raised a mercy seat, from which he gave pardon and forgiveness to all who would apply for them; and that all he had occasion to say, when he thus came before him, was, "God be merciful to me a sinner. Lord, make me to know and believe in Jesus Christ. I feel my need of faith in his righteousness; be pleased to grant it. Lord, I have heard that thou art a merciful God, and hast ordained that thy Son, Jesus Christ, should be the Saviour of the world; and moreover, that thou art willing to bestow him upon such a sinner as me. Lord, take, therefore, this opportunity, and magnify thy grace in the salvation of my soul, through thy Son Jesus Christ. Amen."

Frequent and fervent were Hopeful's applications for mercy, in such language as this; and often did he conclude that God would not answer him. The more he saw of his own unworthiness, the more he was convinced of his need

of an interest in the worthiness of Christ; and the more earnest he became for that interest. His resolutions for amendment were unable to sustain the guilt of his past transgressions; and sinking, from time to time, under the recollection of the past, his constant cry was for that mercy without which he felt that he must perish. Still he durst not give himself up for lost; he knew that God could save; and he cherished a hope, however faint, that in his own time he would reveal his Son to him, as the way, the truth, and the life. Nor was this hope cherished in vain. Long had that passage of Scripture, "If it tarry, wait for it, because it surely will come, and will not tarry," afforded him consolation, and determined him that, if he must perish, he would perish waiting, with Jacob, for God's salvation.

It at length happened that while in great distress, occasioned by the recollection of his past transgressions, and even while waiting for the accomplishment of his final destruction, he suddenly thought that he saw the Saviour looking down upon him, saying, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." He mentally answered, "Lord, I am a great, a very great sinner;" to which the Saviour replied, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Hopeful once more asked, "Lord, what is believing?" and received for answer, "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Thus he saw, that com-

ing to Christ was believing in Christ; and that *believing* was—the affections of the soul going after and resting upon him.

The tears which first stood in his eyes, and afterward rolled down his cheeks,—tears, not of despair, but of assurance,—not of unavailing regret, but of holy joy,—declared the deliverance of his soul; and the spiritual intercourse he afterward enjoyed with God proved that he had not waited for him in vain. All his objections, proceeding from a sense of his unworthiness, were answered, and all his fears were removed. He saw, in the fulness of the Gospel, more than sufficient for his salvation; in its freeness, that he was welcome; and, in its power, that it was a salvation to the uttermost. He experimentally knew that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, that He was the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believed in him; that he died for *his* sins, and rose again for *his* justification; that, having loved him, he had washed him from his sins in his own blood; that he was his Mediator with God; and that he ever liveth to make intercession for him. Again his eyes filled with tears, and again his heart overflowed with joy. He saw in the Saviour a beauty, that he had never seen before. By a solemn act of dedication, he gave himself up to the service of the Lord, and, as we have seen, became the companion of Christian. His subsequent history, with which we are acquainted, shows us the permanency of

the change which had passed upon him, as well as the effects which it produced. His mind being illuminated by the Spirit of truth, he now saw that all the world, notwithstanding its righteousness, was in a state of condemnation. He saw that God could be just, and yet the justifier of the coming sinner; while divine teaching showed him the excellency of a holy life, and caused him to long to do something for Him who had done so much for his soul. His wish was granted, and he became a sincere follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

LECTURE XVIII.

Conversation between the Pilgrims and Ignorance —Dangerous Tendency of the Latter's Sentiments —Nature of Justifying Faith — The Pilgrims leave Ignorance.

It must be exceedingly mortifying to a traveller when, having completed a considerable part of his day's journey, he finds that he has mistaken his road, and that the only alternative left him is to retrace the steps he has taken, until he reaches the spot from which he set out. While man is a traveller for life, he is also a traveller to eternity; and having reached the end of his journey, from whatever cause he may have mistaken the road to heaven, it will then be too late to correct that mistake, however fearful may be its consequences. I make these remarks

for the purpose of showing the importance of seeking those directions, and obtaining that guide, which will infallibly conduct us to the rest which remaineth for the people of God. I make them also for the purpose of showing that, at whatever stage of our journey we discover that we have erred, it is our indispensable duty there to stop, until we can be thoroughly satisfied as to the path we must take, and for the future keep. It will be asked, From whence are we to receive our directions, and by whom are we to be guided? I answer, we can only receive our directions from the word of God; and that our only guide must be the Spirit of God; nor is it amongst the least of our mercies that we are invited to the one, and promised the other. Should the recollection of these observations accompany us throughout the present lecture, we shall see the danger of the sentiments held by Ignorance. May those by whom they are professed be enabled to divest their minds of prejudice; and, as the convictions of truth present themselves, may they yield to their power; and, following them to their consequences, may they at length ascribe salvation to God and the Lamb!

The Pilgrims found some difficulty in prevailing upon him to join their company, preferring, as he did, to walk alone. When, however, he came up with them, and was asked how matters stood between God and his soul, he replied, I hope well, for I am always full of

good motions, that come into my mind, to comfort me as I walk. His good motions were thoughts of God and heaven, accompanied by desires to see the one, and to reach the other. His heart told him that these must be good thoughts; and, as a proof of their influence, he had left all, in obedience to their suggestions. Of the goodness of his heart, Ignorance entertained not the smallest doubt, seeing that it enabled him to keep the commandments of God; that it declared the goodness and safety of his state; and comforted him in the hopes he entertained of eventually reaching heaven.

Christian's objections to these views of himself, and of his state before God, were scriptural and decided. He reminded him that fallen spirits, and men who had sunk into perdition, must of necessity, at times, think of God; that his wishes, unaccompanied by exertion, correspond with Solomon's description of the soul of the sluggard, which desires and hath nothing; that it remained yet to be seen what he had left for God; that, as for the goodness of his heart, seeing the Lord had pronounced it "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," its evidence of the safety of his state was by no means to be depended upon; and, consequently, that his hopes of reaching heaven were founded neither upon Scripture, nor upon reason.

How much is it to be regretted that sentiments so contrary to the word of God as these,

should be received and cherished by many who bear the Christian name, and who eventually hope to share in its blessings! When by such persons God is thought of, are those thoughts regulated by the description which is given of him in his word? Then would they pronounce his name with reverence, remembering that he is an attentive observer. Then would their most secret actions, and their most retired thoughts, be subjected to the consideration of his presence, and every temptation to sin be met by Hagar's appeal: "Thou, God, seest me." If their thoughts of God are indeed regulated by his word, then do they view him as too holy to regard sin but with abhorrence, and too just to pardon it without satisfaction, and too merciful to condemn those who supplicate forgiveness through the Lord Jesus Christ. Then will they subscribe to every representation made of him in his word, and to the justice and to the immutability of those laws, by which the wicked are condemned to all the consequences of his just displeasure.

The uses to which Ignorance applied his sentiments were to justify himself before God, and thus to merit the blessing of his favour, and to secure a right to the kingdom of heaven. The goodness of his heart, and of his life, were his recommendations to the Saviour; who, for the sake of them, would, as he imagined, receive him. Calculating, therefore, that, in proportion to the goodness of both, would be the

cordiality of his reception, he felt the importance of cherishing the best possible opinion of himself, and consequently regarded Christian with surprise, while describing the deceitfulness and depravity of the human heart, declaring, at the same time, that he would never believe his own heart to be thus bad. It was therefore to no purpose that Christian brought before him those passages of Scripture which, in the most unqualified manner, describe man as so sinful by nature, and by practice, that even the imagination of his heart is only evil, and that continually. Fortified in his opinions, he repelled the charges of error brought against him, and continued to regard Christian as an enemy to his hopes, and to his peace. His own views of justification were delivered in the following words: "I believe that Christ died for sinners, and that I shall be justified before God from the curse, through his gracious acceptance of my obedience to his law." Or thus, "Christ makes my duties that are religious acceptable to his Father, by virtue of his merits, and so shall I be justified." Such was the substance of his creed, and such the ground of his acceptance with God, the errors of which required neither depth of penetration to discover, nor lengthened arguments to disprove. Christian, therefore, endeavoured to show him that no such faith as he professed was to be found in the word of God; that consequently it was false, inasmuch as the righteousness of Christ was appealed to, for the jus-

tification of his actions, and his actions appealed to for the justification of his person; and that, however much it might be trusted to, it would eventually leave him under the just displeasure of God. Christian having thus explained the defects of that faith, so much relied upon by those who never saw the insufficiency of their own righteousness, nor the danger of trusting to it, proceeded to show Ignorance the nature and the uses of that faith which accompanies salvation.

To those who are unacquainted with the Gospel method of justification, it may be necessary to premise, that the righteousness of the Saviour includes his perfect obedience to the requirements of the law, as contained in its two great commands: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself." The ten commandments, called the moral law, is but the distribution and the application of these requirements to the heart, the words, and the actions of man. In the absence of both the will and the power to do these things, he becomes a transgressor of the law, and exposes himself to its penalties. These penalties are the just displeasure of God, and a state of suffering, here and hereafter, for ever. Now, to avert consequences so penal and so dreadful as these, it pleased the second Person in the adorable Trinity to offer to take upon himself the nature of man, and in that nature to do all that the justice of God required of him, as the representative of man; and which,

when performed, God would accept of, and consider it as if done by man himself. It has been just stated that the Saviour, having voluntarily placed himself in the hands of justice, bound himself to submit to all that it demanded. It may also be added, that he was equally bound to submit to all that it inflicted. *Death* was the extent of the penalty awarded man, as the consequence of his transgressions; and to death therefore, in its most dreadful shape, the Saviour submitted. We all know that an untimely death, by the hands of an executioner, —a death witnessed by an unfeeling multitude, and accompanied by every species of mockery, aggravation, and insult, is the last and greatest evil that man in this world can endure. Such a death was the Redeemer's—a death preceded by sufferings which neither the tongue can utter, nor the mind adequately conceive. Thus was the work of man's salvation finished upon the cross, and, if I may so speak, laid up for all, who, feeling their need of it, apply by faith and prayer for an interest in its blessings. It is called the justifying righteousness of Christ, because it furnishes man with the only plea which he can urge for pardon and salvation. It is called the imputed righteousness of Christ, because the merits of it are imputed to, or made over to, man, as the ground of his acceptance with God. It is as free as the love which accomplished it, and renders the subjects of it as secure as they can be made, while they are in a world of sin and of suffering. It is not there-

fore only a great mistake, but at the same time a gross libel upon its Author, to say, with Ignorance, that the cordial reception of this doctrine leads to licentiousness; that it permits the believer in it to loosen the reins of his lusts, and to live in the neglect of that which God has commanded, or in the commission of that which he has forbidden. It is, in effect, to say, that the nearer a man lives to God the farther he will be removed from a righteous and holy life; and that the more he depends upon the finished work of Christ, the greater will be his indifference to the state of his soul.

Every man who has experienced in his soul a work of saving grace, knows that, in proportion as he has been enabled to look steadily at the righteousness of Christ, he has felt that increase of spiritual strength by which he has successfully resisted sin. He has found that state of mind to increase which, in the word of God, is called a hungering and thirsting after righteousness; he has seen, in the sufferings of Christ, an evil in sin, of which he had no previous conception, and a severity in the justice of God, sufficient to shake the Redeemer's soul. It is therefore impossible for a sincere believer to be under the influence of such sentiments and such feelings as these, and to carry them into the deliberate commission of sin. It is equally impossible for a man to remain indifferent to personal holiness, while he thus contemplates the character of a God, so holy, and so just, as to refuse his Son the least abate-

ment of those sufferings to which, for the sake of man, he had exposed himself. It is therefore absurd to say that the doctrine of the Saviour's imputed righteousness leads the mind into a state of indifference, or tends towards the least encouragement in the practice of iniquity.

In recalling to our minds that which has been said, in reference to the righteousness of Christ, it should, at the same time, be remembered, that this righteousness was not for himself, but for his people. As was his assumption of their nature, so was his obedience in that nature. He humbled himself,—no one could do it for him,—he humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. It is therefore of importance briefly to show the means whereby we are made partakers of those blessings which connect with, or flow from, the righteousness of Christ.

Before any mercy, spiritual or temporal, can be received by man, some faculty of the soul, or some power of the body, must be exerted for its reception. Thus we know that the blessings of light are lost upon the man who is blind, because he has no organs of vision through which it can reach the soul. It is the same with sound; the richest harmony, and the harshest discord, are the same to him who is destitute of the organs of hearing. This will at once illustrate the state of the soul, as dead in trespasses and sins, and show the necessity of a spiritual power being imparted to it, in order

that it may embrace those spiritual objects which are revealed in the word of God, and which are freely offered to those who feel their need of them. Among these objects, the justifying righteousness of Christ is one of the most important; to obtain an interest in which should be our first and greatest concern. The means set before us for this purpose are faith and prayer; as, by the former, we receive with gratitude the revelation which God has made in his word; and, by the latter, ask to be made sharers in its blessings. It will here be asked, "Seeing you object to the statement made by Ignorance, as to the purposes which faith is calculated to answer, what place do you assign it in the scale of man's salvation?" I answer, that every believer's salvation is two-fold—the first wrought out *for* him by the Lord Jesus Christ, the latter wrought *in* him by the Holy Spirit. It is with this that we have to do in the answer. Faith, then, is that living principle, which, being formed in the soul by the Spirit of God, commences a series of operations upon the powers of the soul, strengthening them for that work which they have to perform. The Holy Spirit, by degrees, reveals to the believer the nature and the evil of sin; while it is the work of faith to support him under the distress which this occasions. The Spirit intimates to the soul that there are promises of pardon, and faith accompanies it in its inquiries after them. The word of God declares that a Saviour is prepared for man; and faith directs the soul to

ask of God where that Saviour may be found. We have seen, in the case of Hopeful, the manner in which God is pleased to answer these inquiries. The righteousness of Christ is no sooner revealed and offered than faith accepts it; and, speaking figuratively,—investing the soul with it, as a garment, enables the believer to rejoice in its sufficiency. The righteousness of Christ is not, therefore, intended to hide from God the sinfulness of man; nor is it given to any, or will it be received by any, until they are stripped of their own righteousness, as well as their own sinfulness, and have been washed in the fountain of a Redeemer's blood. It is then that the Spirit clothes them with the righteousness in question, and enables them to ascribe the whole of their salvation to the Lamb that was slain.

Many who hear, and many more who will afterward read, these Lectures, will feel no hesitation in subscribing to the truth of these representations. They have been taught to ascribe to faith a much greater importance than it can receive from the creed of Ignorance. By viewing it as the only medium through which the blessings of salvation can reach the soul, they regard it as a principle, destitute of which they cannot please God; they view it as the feet which alone can carry the soul to Christ; as the eye which alone can see him; and as the arms which alone can embrace him. It is this which brings peace into the conscience, as a messenger from the God and Father of mercies.

It is as the pipe of a conduit, the ends of which are united to Christ and the soul, and through which every blessing of salvation flows. It may be compared to the veins and arteries of the human frame, carrying to the remotest parts of the system the vital fluid. Sooner could the body live without them, than the soul that is without faith live before God. I was almost tempted to compare it to the tree of life, which, planted in the garden of the soul, and watered with the dews of heaven, and living under the immediate influences of the Sun of Righteousness, and breathed upon by the Holy Spirit, brings, to the latest period of its existence, fruit —precious fruit to the glory of God.

It will perhaps be said, "You have not mentioned good works, as having any thing to do with salvation, although the apostle James has said that a man is justified by them." Neither have I spoken of the blood of Christ, although the apostle Paul has said that it is the procuring cause of our justification, This subject has perplexed many, and caused some to suppose that there is a contradiction in the terms, if not in the ideas they are intended to convey. A few words will reconcile their meaning, and show their harmony as a whole.

It will be remembered that there are three bars at which a man is arraigned;—the bar of God, the bar of his own conscience, and the bar of his fellow-creatures;—for each of which God has provided him with a suitable justification. I call them *suitable*, because that which

justifies man at one bar will not justify him at another. Thus, for instance, he comes before God as a guilty sinner. Here neither his faith nor his works can justify him; and therefore the only plea allowed him is, the sufferings and death of the Saviour, included in the word "blood." Hence the apostle Paul says, in the fifth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, and the ninth verse, "Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." To this declaration agrees the Old Testament representation of the method of justifying Israel. Without blood, the high-priest durst not appear in the presence of God, it being expressly said that it made atonement for the soul. The offering was made by sprinkling; which done, the Lord absolved his people through the instrumentality of his servant, the minister of the sanctuary. The simple design of all this was, to direct the believing Israelite to seek forgiveness, not through "the blood of bulls, and of goats," but through "the blood of the everlasting covenant."

However great may be the intrinsic value of spiritual blessings, that value is considerably increased as they become ours. To bring, therefore, home to the soul the blessings of redemption, is the peculiar work of that faith which is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit. One effect produced by the knowledge of sin is the disturbance of the soul. This is generally followed by alarming apprehensions of the danger to which it exposes. The conscience, which has

hitherto slumbered, partakes of this alarm; and, while it continues, days and nights are passed in anxiety and restlessness. It pleases God at length to impart that principle of faith, so often mentioned in the course of this Lecture, and which (if I may speak so familiarly) lays hold of the righteousness of Christ, and brings it to the soul. Compared as it is to the *Best Robe* in the house of the Prodigal's father, the soul is at length arrayed in it, and prepares itself to answer all the accusations of conscience, all the recollections of past guilt, and all the fears of future punishment. The defence, thus made, and grounded,—not upon the sincerity of repentance for the past, nor on any moral change which has passed upon the soul, nor upon any resolutions of future piety and virtue, but solely and entirely upon that which Christ has done and suffered,—is admitted by the conscience as sufficient; and a peace, and a joy, passing all understanding, flows into the mind. This is precisely the case referred to by the same apostle, when he says, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;"—justified in our own consciences, bringing into our souls peace with God, and that peace flowing through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The intercourse we have just described, as passing between God and the soul, cannot be known to the world. It is therefore in vain to expect them to give us credit for any internal change that may have taken place. But as the evidence of that change is found in the life, they

will continne to arraign our state at the bar of their opinion, and condemn, or acquit, solely upon the evidence of our works. Now, when they see the sabbath-breaker, the swearer, and the drunkard, not only abstain from these vices, but practise with delight the opposite virtues, and that not merely for a week, or a month, but uniformly, and constantly,—hard as the men of the world are in their belief, they will be forced to acknowledge that some mighty agent has been at work: and they will justify the profession of the Gospel, thus made, because good works now bear witness to it; while, on the contrary, no profession of faith, however consistent with the Scriptures, nor declarations of hope, however ardent, will obtain credit from them, so long as the conduct and conversation remain unchanged.

I am perfectly aware that many will object to these remarks, in the language of Ignorance: "What! you are a man for revelation!—I do believe that what both you, and all the rest, say about this matter, is but the fruit of distracted brains."—This charge divides itself into two parts, contradicting each other; for if what has been said be the fruit of distracted brains then it cannot be a revelation from heaven. That the latter is the case, we not only readily admit, but apply the objection to every part of the Christian religion, declaring it, from beginning to end, a revelation from God, made to the perishing children of men. The view which we have taken of the nature of justifying faith, and

which is but the amplification of Christian's description of it, was offensive to Ignorance. After, therefore, a solemn admonition from Christian, the Pilgrims increased their pace, and soon left him at a considerable distance behind them.

LECTURE XIX.

Nature and Advantages of Holy Fear—Description of Temporary, Turnback, and Saveself— The Pilgrims enter the land of Beulah, and arrive at the River without a Bridge.

It is painful to reflect upon the indifference with which erroneous sentiments are by many regarded. One common mode of expression, the tendency of which has never been calculated upon, is, "It matters not what people believe, if their lives be but consistent." In answer to this, it should be remembered that the foundation of all acceptable obedience must be laid in the revealed will of God; that according to it must be the worship which we offer to God; and that, consequently, every known departure from it is a subtraction from the honour due to his holy name. Comparing, therefore, the Gospel to a tree, it may be said that its doctrines are the root, our experimental acquaintance with them the sap, and the holiness of our lives the fruit. It is for the want of this distinction that these persons mistake the decencies and the moralities of life for the fruits of evangelical obedience.

Such appears to have been the complaint of Christian and Hopeful, after their separation from Ignorance, against not only whole families, but whole neighbourhoods; an inquiry into the cause of which furnished the Pilgrims with a topic of conversation, remembering that they were still upon the Enchanted Ground.

Among the causes of this ignorance, over which the Pilgrims mourned, was the striving of those who were the subjects of it against their convictions of the evil of sin. This they did under a mistaken notion, that they must attain to a certain degree of holiness, ere they could be qualified to receive the blessings of salvation. Guilt and fear are the natural consequences of sin, and, as they imagine, the marks of a reprobate state. When, therefore, they begin to possess the mind, they are regarded as disturbers; and, in order to remove them, self-righteous professors call to their aid the goodness of their hearts, and the holiness of their lives. Their efforts are successful; they flatter themselves with an assurance of heaven, because they are not in trouble as other men are; and regard with pity, if not with scorn, those who groan under a body of sin and death. The truth of these remarks you have often witnessed in the conduct of unconverted men in the prospect of death. When spoken to, in reference to their hopes of salvation, their reply often is, that they are not afraid to die. They have never done any one harm, and they have made their peace with

God. If, in answer to this representation of their state, they are reminded of the deceitfulness of the human heart, and of the depravity of human nature; and if told that an internal change must be effected by the agency of the Holy Spirit, compared by our Lord to being born again,—then it is that they begin to fortify their minds against the fears which this statement is calculated to excite; and relying upon the goodness of their hearts, and the morality of their lives, they regard with indifference the advice which is offered. Unthinking bystanders confirm them in their sentiments; and, singing a requiem to their souls, lull them to sleep in the arms of carnal security.

Opposed to this, there are some who, taking a Scriptural view of the nature of that fear which is the beginning of wisdom, regarding it as designed to humble them before God, and believing that they must be made to feel the evil of sin, here or hereafter, rather welcome, than repel, its advances: remembering that they deserve infinitely more of suffering than it is able to inflict. They therefore remain passive under its operations, relying upon God for that support which he has promised, and hoping that, in the Lord's own time, it will yield to those applications of his mercy, and of his love, which are so frequently mentioned in the Gospel. Like a plough, they feel its operations on the heart, making wide and deep the furrows of evangelical repentance; and, although this pro-

cess is accompanied with sighs and tears, yet they are supported by the promise, that those who sow in tears shall reap with joy. From this state of mind, there arises an inquiry of a most interesting nature; namely, Is the fear that they are the subjects of legal or evangelical? God in mercy is pleased to afford them an answer, by directing their attention to its rise and effects, and by comparing these things with the word of God, and the uniform experience of his people. In tracing it back to its source, they discover that it has taken its rise from saving convictions of the evil of sin, as an offence against God, and as the cause of that misery which they have endured. As they have watched its progress, they have discovered that it has humbled them in the very dust before God; that it has led them, with unceasing importunity, to supplicate an interest in the blood and righteousness of a crucified Saviour; and that, as that interest has been communicated to their souls, it has excited the most ardent love to the Redeemer, and the sincerest desires to live to his glory. Nor does its mighty working close here. If, from the mercies which have thus been communicated, an undue elevation should be felt in the mind, or a spirit of Pharisaic pride begin to manifest itself, the voice of this fear whispers to the soul, "Who maketh thee to differ, and what hast thou, that has not been given to thee? Call to thy recollection thy past guilty state. Remember thine own miseries, and the Lord's

mercies. Suppress these risings of pride, and subdue this unholy elevation of soul. Enter into the rock and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord and for the glory of his majesty." With humility, the soul acknowledges the justness of this reproof, and prays for an increasing sense of the majesty of God, and for a growing tenderness of conscience, and for a more decided piety, and for a more earnest zeal, that the name of God may not be dishonoured, nor his Holy Spirit be grieved, nor the enemy have cause to speak reproachfully of that profession which he has been enabled to make. It is thus that (to borrow a sea-phrase) holy fear is made the ballast of a Christian profession; and it is for the reasons already assigned, that the believer derives advantages from the operations of the very principle so much dreaded by those who are ignorant of its tendency.

The names of *Temporary*, *Turnback*, and *Saveself*, are merely introduced for the purpose of showing the reasons why so many persons, after a profession of the Gospel, return to the world.—These men, for a time, appear to be under deep and serious impressions of the evil of sin, and of their guilty state before God. It is by no means unusual for them to weep under a sermon, to seek acquaintance with the people of God, and to express themselves in the most friendly manner, when religious characters and religious subjects are under discussion. Not a few of them, during the continuance of this

state of mind, have gained admission into Christian churches; and, for a time, have manifested those dispositions which became the profession they thus made. To the sincere regret, however, of those who had witnessed these indications of a change of heart, they have observed an occasional absence from the house of God, and an occasional conformity to the world, in things forbidden by the word of God. The friendly admonitions given upon this neglect, and upon this impropriety, were not altogether received in that spirit of meekness, and with those acknowledgments of error, which might have been expected from persons who, bearing the Christian name, were supposed to be amenable to the regulations of a Christian society. A growing indifference to the ways of God, and to the society of his people, and an increasing conformity to the spirit and to the conduct of the men of the world, would of necessity call for a more distinctly marked disapprobation, which, received in anger rather than love, would widen the breach, and end in separation. A very short time would realize the fears which the members of the Church had entertained, and painfully satisfy them that their profession was Temporary, that their name was Turnback, and that, without the least regard for the honour of God, their design was Saveself. Bunyan assigns four reasons for this conduct.

In the first place, the minds of these men are unchanged, although their consciences are

awakened; and, by this awakening, being brought under the power of guilt, they begin to ask, "What must we do to be saved?" It is under these circumstances that they are led to inquire a little more closely into the nature and design of the Gospel; and finding that its proclamations of pardon, and offers of peace, are adapted to their state, they are induced to avail themselves of the one, and to accept of the other; believing that, by these means, they shall secure the favour of God, and their own salvation. This willingness continues just as long as their fears and guilt prevail: as they subside, so subsides their Christian profession, until, at length, their hopes of heaven and happiness die, and they return to their former courses, probably rejoicing in their imaginary freedom. Many will draw from these remarks, and these conclusions, a painful but correct description of themselves.

A second cause will be found in the influence of those slavish fears which undecided professors of religion are never free from. The sneers and taunts of worldly relatives, or of professed friends—the threats of a superior, or the entreaties of an equal,—will sometimes come as a dark cloud over their fairest prospects of future happiness in the ways of God, and damp that ardour which they but recently imagined was sufficient to carry them through every difficulty. As fears of this nature prevail, so will their resolutions yield; until, wearied with the

contest, between the fears of hell, the hopes of heaven, and the dread of man, the subject of them will abandon his profession, and, with the former class of persons, return to the world.

The shame that attends religion sometimes proves a stumbling-block in the way of those whose pride and haughtiness induce them to regard, as low and contemptible, many of the holiest servants of God. "What must our genteel connexions think, and what will the world say, of our associating with a parcel of low people, whom nobody knows? Doubtless the blessings of salvation *are* great, and it is the duty of every one to seek an interest in them; but really it is too much to ask so great a sacrifice of feeling, as being placed on a level with such creatures demands. We probably might not find much difficulty in coming to the sacrament occasionally, seeing we sometimes hear the minister of the place, and have some respect for him, and think that he preaches the Gospel; but nothing of what you call your Church-meetings, or your Church-fellowship, will do for us." Shame, cover, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, such professors of religion as these! From the world we expect these objections, and seldom are we disappointed; but for those who know and approve the Gospel, and hope to be saved by it, to urge objections against the poverty of those whom the Lord has chosen, and to refuse to associate with them in divine ordinances because of it, argues the absence of that which forms one of the most

distinguishing features of the Gospel,—a meek and lowly spirit.

The operations of guilt, and the terror it occasions, deter many from hearing and following the Gospel to its consequences. Unable to find that pleasure in sin which they once enjoyed, they regard the Gospel as an enemy, and harden themselves against it. Their efforts are too successful. By degrees they shake off the terrors which at first annoyed them. As the recollection of their guilty state presents itself to the mind, they endeavour to fly from it; and not unfrequently do these infatuated persons rush into the extremes of wickedness, to destroy, if possible, the very hope of returning by repentance and prayer to God. It is therefore not to be wondered at, that, given up to the hardness of their hearts, they fall into a course of iniquity, at the very apprehension of which they would once have shuddered.

Nearly the whole of these characters, Christian compares to a criminal, when brought before the judge to receive the sentence of the law. The fears of death will cause him to tremble; he sees the danger to which he is exposed, but knows not how to escape it. It is impossible, under these circumstances, for a spectator to say, whether his distress is occasioned by a conviction of the guilt of his conduct, or by the fear of its consequences. Should, however, a pardon follow the sentence of the law, and the man restored to his liberty return to the commission of crime, it will then be ap-

parent that the apprehension of death, and not the exercise of repentance, was the cause of that distress to which we have adverted.

A brief description of the steps by which men descend, until they reach that level of depravity which is suited to their dispositions, is given by Christian; at the close of which it will be found that the Pilgrims have entered the country of Beulah. He says that they first draw off their thoughts as much as they can from the consideration of God, of death, and of judgment. By degrees the private duties of religion, such as secret prayer, watching over their tempers, and keeping in subjection their unholy passions, are neglected. This, followed by their avoiding the society of active, useful Christians, causes them to watch most narrowly the conduct of those from whom they are desirous of separating, in order that, by the discovery of some of their infirmities, they may, in some measure, find an apology for their own sins. Nor are opportunities long wanting. There are, in the most upright of men, some lines of conduct, to which a false and wicked mind may give a deceitful colouring, and, by that colouring, impose upon the ignorant and unsuspecting. Such is their object; and no sooner is it accomplished than they herd with loose and wicked men,—begin to indulge, in secret, what they are pleased to call little sins; —at length they venture to bring them to the light, and are not ashamed to claim them as their own. These eventually are dismissed for

greater ones; and now, hardened to their own destruction, they at length perish in their own deceivings, unless, indeed, it pleases God, by a miracle of grace, to bring them, as perishing sinners, to the footstool of mercy.

By the time that this conversation closed, the Pilgrims found themselves on the borders of the country of Beulah, the literal meaning of which name is *inhabited* or *married*. It is probably intended, by the author of the Pilgrim's Progress, to describe that state of mental rest, or assurance, which not unfrequently precedes the entrance of the believer into everlasting felicity. It is also often afforded for the purpose of strengthening the believer against the pains of a dying hour, in the fulfilment of that great and precious promise, "As thy day is, thy strength shall be;" for the soul, now favoured with an uninterrupted intercourse with the Saviour, and regarding the past trials of life, and difficulties of the way, as so many causes for praise; and having, by faith, a view of eternal glory,—the man of God begins to feel a desire to meet, rather than retire from death, in order that, by the dissolution of the union between soul and body, the one may rest in the grave, and the other be for ever with the Lord. The sweetness and the pleasantness of the air shows how far, beyond the damps and fogs of worldly enjoyments, lies the land of Beulah. It will, therefore, excite no surprise that the Pilgrims for a season here solaced themselves. The darkness of the Valley of the Shadow of

Death extended not to this place, nor could Doubting Castle be seen from it; while the strongest assurances that their pilgrimage was nearly over consoled them for all the sufferings they had endured. Many were the visits which they received from the Most High, and bright and blessed was the prospect which lay before them. They had reached that state of their journey, where the Bridegroom met them, and where God himself rejoiced over them. The fulness of the blessings of salvation, represented by an abundance of corn and wine, and which they had so earnestly sought during their pilgrimage, was all that they could here enjoy. Death alone could introduce them to those glories, and to that blessedness, which God had laid up for them in heaven; nor was it the least part of their present comfort, that they heard loud voices from the city of God, saying, "Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold thy salvation cometh;" while the inhabitants of this place, as they saw them, said to one another, "These are the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord."

How striking the contrast between the course of the wicked, and the course of the righteous; and how sad the reflection, that after the most earnest entreaties, and after the most solemn warnings, and after the most alarming threatenings, the former have persisted in a course of iniquity! They have fought against the conviction of conscience; and,

through this world's wilderness, they have cleared for themselves a passage to devouring flames! The world has not lost its hold upon them, the powers of darkness still maintain their ascendancy over their souls, the love of sin still carries on its dreadful operations, although the power of gratifying that love is now withdrawn. Like a wreck at sea, the sport of every tempest, a few moments longer and their souls will be ingulfed in bottomless and eternal perdition. No God do they here find to listen to their cries, nor Saviour now to weep over the hardness of their hearts, nor hand stretched out to save them; the next coming wave, as a minister of long-withheld vengeance, will execute upon them the wrath of God, and hide from them every hope of mercy, and shut out from them the remotest prospect of deliverance. O could those who have thus perished, for one short hour return to their haunts of wickedness, and visit their companions in vice, how would they tell them of a worm that never dies,—of a fire that never can be quenched,—and of a torment, the smoke of which ascends for ever and for ever!

Aware that the representations of the final state of the wicked, as given in the word of God, were never intended for the exercise of ingenuity, or to show how well they might be descanted upon, I would entreat my hearers to compare, with the word of God, that which has just been delivered, and to ask themselves,

whether or not the remarks that have been made come considerably short of the fearful description there given, of that state of wretchedness, of which many are the subjects in a dying hour, and which, with all the aggravations of a painful retrospection, forms but a prelude to woes yet to be endured. Leaving this painful subject, we return to the Pilgrims, for the purpose of once more contemplating that joy of which they were now made the happy subjects. Great as it was, death, for a moment, was to interrupt it; that interruption over, it was to reach an elevation that mortal thought can never follow, nor eternity itself ever impair.

The nearer they drew towards the eternal City, the more distinct was their view of it, and the greater their earnestness to reach it; while, as food, these desires nourish their souls, until, under the agency of the Holy Spirit, they were strengthened for the conflict they had to sustain.—At a distance they saw the heavenly Jerusalem. Its walls and gates appeared made of pearls and jewels, and its streets paved with gold. The uncreated glory of God shone upon it: so that the reflection of its beams overcame the Pilgrims, and caused them to address those who passed by: "If ye see our beloved, tell him that we are sick of love." By degrees, however, they recovered, and found that an increase of strength enabled them to bear the dazzling glories of the place. They soon reached the gardens and the vineyards, which sur-

round and border the city, and which are only separated from it by a river, which we shall ere long have to describe. Of the Gardener (the minister who attended them in the immediate prospect of death), they asked, "To whom do these belong?" and received for answer, "The King; and they are planted here for his own delight, and for the solace of Pilgrims." Welcomed to the produce of them as the Pilgrims were, they largely partook of it, and reaching at length some walks and an arbour, frequented by the King, they here stopped, until they fell asleep. Sleep itself was not sufficient to obliterate the sense they had of the enjoyments of the place; for, by the Gardener, we are informed, that it was one property of the fruit to cause the lips of them that are asleep to talk.

I mistake if the arbour be not the bed upon which the Pilgrim lies down, and which he only leaves for a blissful eternity. I am the more confirmed in this opinion, by three circumstances :—by its being the place which the King frequents,—by the attendance of the Gardener, and by the interview they shortly after had with two persons, clothed in raiment that shone like gold, and with countenances beautiful and clear as unclouded day. I am fully satisfied that, in the soul of a dying believer, there is often a peace, and a joy, which passeth all understanding; and that, as death clears the film of mortality from his eyes, he sees into the eternal world, and holds spiritual intercourse with its inhabitants. In the next Lecture I shall

therefore entreat my hearers to fix their attention on the simple operation of his mind, as he approaches the river of Death, encouraged and directed as he is by those to whom we have so often referred, as "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation."

LECTURE XX.

Description of the River of Death—Diversified Experience of Believers, while passing through it—The Pilgrims' Arrival at the Kingdom of Heaven — Description of their Blessedness— Concluding Reflections.

It was remarked, in the course of the preceding Lecture, that one great end to be answered by that state of holy tranquillity, with which believers are sometimes favoured before death, is, that they may obtain strength to suffer those pains which often accompany dissolution. It was also remarked that the suspension of their joys is but momentary, to be resumed after death; and that then they would acquire a permanency which eternity itself would not be able to remove. It would be of importance to carry the recollection of these observations throughout the present Lecture.

We are informed that, as the Pilgrims kept advancing towards the eternal world, their celestial guardians received from them an account of the many trials they had passed through, the many difficulties and dangers they had

surmounted, and the many pleasures and comforts they had enjoyed by the way. In return for this information, they were now given to understand, that two more difficulties were all they would meet with, before they reached their long-wished-for home. What these difficulties were, they had yet to learn. For their consolation, they were assured that they should have the society of angels; while, for the completion of their Christian character, their faith was once more to be tried by the solemnities of a dying hour. Thus they went on together, until they came in sight of the gate of the city, when, at the same moment, they found themselves stopped by a river, apparently deep. As the children of Israel probably felt, when they knew that they must pass through Jordan before they could enter the promised land, so felt the Pilgrims, as they contemplated this formidable river, and found that there was neither bridge nor ferry by which they could hope to cross. By the angels they were informed that only two Pilgrims, Enoch and Elijah, had been permitted to reach the city without passing through the waters of the river, nor would any more be thus privileged, until the last trumpet should sound, the dead be raised, and the living in a moment be changed from mortality to immortality. To pass through the river was God's appointment; nor could man, by any means, alter it. A degree of despondency seemed to take possession of the minds of the Pilgrims, as they heard this de-

claration; and they prepared to pass through "Death's cold flood."

There is much beauty and strength in the figurative representation of Death by a river. The coldness of the waters, the uncertainty of their depth, the time that it would take to pass through them, and the prevalency of their fears during this time,—all tend to show the necessity of a strong and lively faith, that the believer may realize that sense of his Master's presence which shall enable him to take hold of his promise: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." For reasons, best known to himself, it has sometimes pleased the Lord to permit many of his people, in this eventful hour, to feel as if they were forsaken by him. The pains of death, now for the first time felt, accompanied by the recollection of many transgressions committed, both before and after conversion, together with the activity of the enemy of souls,—all combine to obliterate, for a time, the recollection of the Lord's past merciful kindness, and to make the believer conclude that the Lord will utterly forsake him. It is apparently to no purpose that he is reminded of his past devotedness to God; that his life has been consistent with that profession of the Gospel he has made; and that the promises of God are unchangeable in their nature, and eternal in their duration. His fears, temptations, and pains, outweigh these

representations; and the tried and sinking believer concludes that he shall never see the face of the Lord in peace. His soul is in a state of darkness that may be felt; his attention is distracted by the harassings of his foes; and he has become almost insensible to every thing but his danger. Surely, if this be the death of many of the righteous, what expectations should the wicked form of theirs? Through the tender mercies of the Most High, this state of soul is seldom of any long continuance. Light, and joy, and peace, break in upon the soul; and the expiring believer is sometimes tempted to ask, "My soul, can this be death?"

An actively pious Christian, whose time and talent had been consecrated to the service of God, was, for a time, left to sink under the most fearful apprehensions of his displeasure. Long and fervently did he pray that he might be favoured with the Lord's presence, while passing through the cold waters of death. The hour at length arrived; and, to the distress of his friends, the consolations of the Holy Spirit were withheld. His hold on the promises was loosened; and he seemed on the borders of darkness and despair. In vain did his friends remind him of the faithfulness of God; in vain did they place before him the consistency and holiness of his past life: he feared that he never had a saving interest in the one, and that he had only been deceiving himself by the other. And, in this state of soul, unable to take consolation, he

seemed fast sinking into the arms of death. His senses receded; and a convulsive throe caused one of his friends to exclaim, "He is dead!" His afflicted wife, with an hysterical scream, fell upon his body; when, to the surprise and joy of all present, he gently opened his eyes, beaming with the mildness of heaven, and said to her, "Cruel, cruel love! I was just entering my Father's house, when you called me away." He again closed his eyes, and left his friends below, to join the family of the redeemed above.

Of such a nature as this was the dying experience of Christian. As he entered the river, he found the depth of it to be considerable; and, beginning to sink, he cried to Hopeful, "I sink in deep waters; the billows go over my head; all his waves go over me." His companion endeavoured to comfort him, by an assurance that he felt the bottom, and that it was good. The distress and apparent danger of Christian increased, and, exclaiming, "Ah, my friend, the sorrows of death have compassed me about, I shall not see the land that flows with milk and honey," a horror and darkness fell upon him, which, for a time, rendered him insensible to the danger of his situation. Coming, however, by degrees, to himself, he appeared destitute of every hope of salvation, and turned from the consolations offered him to the contemplation of his misery, which, arising out of the recollection of his past transgressions, seemed to forbid the indulgence of hope, and to urge

him to the borders of despair. To add, if possible, to the gloom of his soul, and to the weight of his misery, the powers of darkness, which he had hitherto so successfully combated, appeared to gather around him, and, by one last and desperate effort, determined, if possible, to prevent his salvation; or, failing in this, so to harass his soul that, not until he had passed through the River, should he find the rest he had so earnestly sought for.

It is by no means unlikely that one part of their work was to accuse him; that they endeavoured to aggravate the enormity of his past guilt; and, from that guilt, to tempt him to despair. It is equally probable that they would lay before him the infinite holiness of God, the inflexibility of his justice, and the unbending severity with which he would execute his threatenings. It will, perhaps, be asked, Does not the supposition of this being the case militate against those assurances of support, so often given—of the continuance of his presence while passing through the waters of death? I think not; for as a skilful and victorious general may suffer a part of his troops to be oppressed by an enemy whose defeat is inevitable, but whom he suffers to conflict with his men for the trial of their strength, and for the increase of their valour; so may it please the Lord to suffer the enemy of souls to muster and to concentrate all his energies,—to renew his attacks upon the believer, in that hour when, to all human ap-

pearance, they are the least likely to meet with successful resistance, and, by this very means, display his own faithfulness, the power of that grace which he has promised, and the sufficiency of that support which his people have experienced in the final conflict! For it should be remembered that, throughout the whole of Christian's distress, he neither impeached the justice, nor called in question the goodness, of God. Unable to resist the accumulation of his misery, he sunk under it, justifying God, and charging upon himself the sufferings he endured. Nor do I hesitate in saying that, had he finally perished, it would have been with the acknowledgment, that God was still holy, just, and good. The effect of this scene upon bystanders would be twofold. In the first place, they would see the danger of leaving living work for a dying hour; for if, as it has been already said, the death of a believer be accompanied by such apprehensions as Christian was the subject of, what then should be the anticipations of men who, after a course of iniquity, are called to the solemnities of a dying hour, without one assurance of support, and without any expectation or hope of everlasting life? The second effect produced upon those who were permitted to witness the death of Christian, would be felt at that moment wherein God would remove every enemy, and lift him above sorrow, and give him an unobstructed view of the honour, the glory, and the immortality, which awaited him.

Returning again to the Pilgrims, we are in-

formed that Hopeful endeavoured to comfort his brother, by reminding him of the manner in which many of the wicked die, and by assuring him that his darkness and distress of soul were no marks of the Lord's having forsaken him, but were only intended to try that faith which had withstood the most violent shocks of the enemy, and enabled him to triumph over all his fraud, and over all his force. It was during this affectionate reasoning of Hopeful, that, with a degree of holy confidence, he said, "Be of good cheer; Jesus Christ maketh thee whole." The effect which these words had upon Christian can scarcely be described. His doubts, his fears, his darkness and distresses, fell before them. His soul appeared stronger than the waters of Death: and, as he now stemmed them, he cried, "Oh, I see him again! I hear him, and he tells me, 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.'" The waters of the river had by this time become shallower: Christian, therefore, found ground for his feet to stand on; and a few more steps brought the Pilgrims safely to the heavenly side of the River of Death. The experience of Hopeful was calm and tranquil throughout. His faith in the Lord was unshaken, and in its strength he was enabled to glorify God. The joy of them both may be better conceived than it can well be described. Their pilgrimage was closed, their eternity of joy commenced, and a brief but glowing description of their entrance

into the presence of God, and their welcome by him, separates between ourselves and the Pilgrims, until we meet them in heaven.

Mason, in one of his notes upon this part of the Pilgrim's Progress, has expressed his regret that its author did not dwell at much greater length upon the glories of heaven, and upon the joys of the redeemed; at the same time observing that, were he permitted to revisit the world, he would apply the declaration of the apostle Paul to the felicity he had left, and say, "The eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, neither can the heart of man conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." In answer to this note, I am free to confess my inadequacy, even to follow the description given by the author, so as to increase that interest which many of its readers have felt and acknowledged. It is my duty, however, to attempt an explanation, although the attempt may fail, and be the cause of disappointment.

Upon the Pilgrims reaching the Canaan side of the River, they were met by the two Shining Ones, who had been with them while in prospect of death, and by whom they had been informed, that without passing through it they could not reach the heavenly City. Permitted now to reveal themselves more fully than they had hitherto done, they addressed them, saying, "We are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation." The City itself stood upon a hill, towards the gate of which they ascended with an alacrity

they never before had experienced. Their mortal garments being left in the River, and they being permitted to lean upon the arms of their heavenly attendants, in this manner they passed through the upper regions, receiving such answers to their inquiries as their present happy situation induced them to make.

They were informed that the glory of the place to which they were going was indescribable; that the society of it would consist of holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect; that they would, ere long, enter the paradise of God, and partake of the never-fading fruits of the Tree of Life; and that sickness, sorrow, sin, and death, would never more disturb their peace, or interrupt their joys. In answer to the question, of what nature would be their employment, they were informed that it would be the perpetual service of the King, before whom they would have to appear in white robes, with crowns of gold upon their heads; and that, thus glorified, they would offer praise and thanksgiving, for the exercise of that mercy which had spared them while in the wilderness; and for the manifestations of that power which had supported them under all the difficulties of the way, and had finally brought them to the full enjoyment of the blessings of the kingdom of heaven. They were also informed that, on the day that God should arise to judge the world, it would be their privilege to follow him, not merely to witness, but to take an interesting part in its solemnities.

Great as must be the joy arising out of uninterrupted intercourse with the inhabitants of heaven, it would still be incomplete, were the presence of God to be withheld. They were therefore informed that they should enjoy the perpetual sight and vision of the Holy One, he having declared that his people shall see him as he is. Thus happy in the enjoyment of God, and of each other, their happiness would rather be increased, than diminished, as it rolled on through eternity; every accession to their number augmenting their joy, until it reached a fulness which the utmost stretch of the human mind, in its present state, cannot comprehend.

How far the description which Bunyan has given, of a believer's entrance into the eternal world, is correct, we shall learn as we pass into it ourselves. It is, however, highly probable, that those ministering spirits, who have attended us here, will be distinctly seen and conversed with by us hereafter. It is also equally probable, that their ministry will not close, until we are introduced to the Saviour, by whom, as the purchase of his blood, we shall be acknowledged, and be received among the redeemed in heaven. Although their ministry may thus cease, affection will continue to subsist between them, and the now holy spirits of whom they had charge, while strangers and pilgrims in the wilderness. This affection will lead them to communicate such information, respecting the kingdom of heaven, as will at once interest and rejoice those who receive it.

It will also enable them to account for many of the trying and mysterious dispensations of Providence, which they were the subjects of, while in the world; while their knowledge of the necessity for these dispensations will raise their gratitude, and compel them to admit that God has done all things well.

As Christian and Hopeful, with their celestial guides, continued to advance towards the Gate of the Celestial City, they saw coming to meet them a company of the heavenly host, to whom they were introduced by their attendants, who said, "These are the men that loved our Lord when they were in the world, and that have left all for his holy name. He hath sent us to fetch them, and we have brought them thus far on their desired journey, that they may go in, and see their Redeemer's face with joy." This information was, by the heavenly host, received with acclamation, saying, "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb." Amongst the company that came out to meet them were several of the King's Trumpeters, clothed in white and shining raiment, and who likewise welcomed them with shouting, and with the sound of their trumpets. The nearer they drew to the City, the greater was the increase of its inhabitants; until, to the Pilgrim's imaginations, the whole population of heaven had come out to meet them. In this manner, we are informed, they passed through the upper regions, surrounded by thousands and tens of thousands of holy, happy

spirits, vieing with each other in expressions of joy for their arrival. Absorbed in joy, they at length stood before the Gate of the City.

The impression made upon our minds, by the representation we have just attended to, is, that heaven is a place as well as a state; that it is a local residence, placed at a vast distance from the world, accessible only by a passage through the regions of space (I know not how else to describe it), by which the messengers of heaven reach the world, and by which the spirits of just men made perfect reach the mansions of glory. It is represented under the idea of a walled city, probably Mount Zion; and hence its walls are said to be "salvation," and its gates "praise." The description of the heavenly Jerusalem, as given in the twenty-first chapter of the book of the Revelations, seems to have furnished the author of the Pilgrim's Progress with the representation he has given of the City of God, especially as he has borrowed the inscription, written over one of its gates, from the fourteenth verse of the twenty-second chapter of the same book. I am fully aware of the objections which may be urged against many of these conclusions. I beg leave, however, to say, that my business is, as it has been, to follow the original work, so as to render it as plain as the allegorical structure of it will admit. I would also again remind my hearers, that the work itself is an allegory, delivered "under the similitude of a dream."

The Pilgrims, standing before the Gate

were directed to call to those who had the care of it. In answer to that call, Enoch, Moses, and Elijah, looked down from the top of it, and were informed that "these Pilgrims had come from the City of Destruction for the love they had to the King of the place." Their certificates were given in; and, being presented to the King, he asked, "Where are the men?" The answer was, "They are standing without the Gate." The King then commanded them to open the Gate, that the righteous nation, that keepeth truth, might enter in. The Gate was opened; and the Pilgrims, as they entered, were transfigured; the promised raiment was given to them, which shone like gold; crowns were also put upon their heads, in token of honour; and harps were placed in their hands, with which they might offer praise to God. The inhabitants of the City appeared in motion, to meet them; a burst of joy testified their gladness at the arrival of the Pilgrims, who themselves, joining the general chorus of praise, sang, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever." During the time that the Gate stood open, the Dreamer looked in, and saw that the City shone bright as the sun in the firmament. He saw that the streets were paved with gold, and that many of the glorified persons there walked with crowns on their heads, some with palms, and others with golden harps in their hands, with which, like Christian and Hopeful, they offered praise to

the Lord. Some he also saw with wings; and who, without intermission, cried, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord!" While thus contemplating the glories of the place, the Gate was shut, and the author wished himself among them.

Turning his face from the Gate, he saw, come to the side of the River, Ignorance, who found but little difficulty in crossing it, having engaged *Vain Hope*, a *Ferry-man*, who soon landed him on the heavenly side of the River. Here, however, no one met him. Still he boldly went up to the Gate, and knocked for admission, as in the former case. He was asked whence he came, and what he desired; to which he answered, "I have eaten and drunk in the presence of the King, and he has taught in our streets. He was then asked for his certificate, but was obliged to confess that he was without one. A report of this was made to the King, who not only refused to see him, but commanded the Shining Ones, who had conducted Christian and Hopeful, to bind him hand and foot, and to take him away. This they did; and, carrying him through the air, they thrust him into the hole that the Pilgrims had seen in the side of the hill. Bunyan's reflection was, "Then I saw that there was a way to hell, even from the gates of heaven, as well as from the City of Destruction."—He awoke, and it was a Dream.

From the account which has been just given, of the manner in which believers are admitted to the more immediate presence of God, we

may learn, that not every one that saith, "Lord, Lord," enjoys this distinguishing honour;—an examination, close and solemn, preceding it;—an examination in which the Holy Spirit appears to be the chief witness, whose testimony is delivered under the idea of a certificate. We may also learn how holy, as well as how glorious, must be the place to which we are going,—from the transfiguration of the Pilgrims,—from the crown, and harps, and palms, which were given them, upon their entrance into the beloved City. So great, and so blessed, are the joys which even now await those who, by patient continuance in well-doing,—by faith and hope in God our Saviour,—look forward to the coming of that hour, when it shall be said, "Absent from the body, present with the Lord!"

In reviewing what has been delivered, we shall perceive what genuine Christianity is. It is not a mere name. It is not a mere profession; but it is a constant pressing forward, through difficulties, and amidst dangers,—avoiding the errors, and abstaining from the sinful practices of the world. As one who has a journey to perform within a given time, and who, by the completion of it, will save the life of a fellow-creature; and who therefore rests not until it be accomplished; so should the man, who hopes to reach the kingdom of heaven, regard this world as a path to eternity, and his life as the only time allowed for reaching it. Under the influence of such a sentiment as this, did Christian, Faithful, and Hopeful, brave all the

dangers of the way; nor hesitated, nor rested, until they reached the City of God. From their history we may learn the faithfulness of God in the manifestations of his grace and strength. He was their light in darkness, their strength in weakness, and their help in trouble. He was with them in life, in death, and in eternity. They honoured God, by reposing unshaken confidence in his word; and He honoured them, by the gift of a full, a free, and an eternal salvation. The best use to which we can apply our knowledge of the false and wicked professors, whose characters we have contemplated, as they were presented to our notice, is — to avoid their errors, and to regard their various dooms as so many beacons, designed to warn us of the danger to which a departure from the simplicity of the Gospel will expose us.

Having now reached the close of the Lectures, and having, for a considerable time past, been engaged in preparing them for the press, it only remains to say a few words in reference to their appearing before the public. It has long been, to many serious persons, a matter of considerable surprise, that, while so many able ministers have delivered Lectures on the Pilgrim's Progress, no one has been induced to publish them; especially, as Bunyan has given an invitation to the reader, if able, to interpret it to his neighbour, with this caution, "Not to play with the outside of his dream; but, putting by the curtains, and looking within the veil, to turn up his metaphors, and from them to draw

the help which they are calculated to afford." The surprise now alluded to is not diminished by the consideration of the universal acceptance of the work itself. There are few of us who, even at an advanced period of life, do not recollect the interest we took, when children, in the travels of Christian, and the delight we felt in contemplating the woodcuts or engraving which set before our eyes —a man with a heavy burden at his back,—that same man encountering Apollyon, in the Valley of Humiliation,—and afterward caged with Faithful in Vanity Fair. Little did many of us think, at that time, that we too should find this world a wilderness, and ourselves strangers and pilgrims in it! With these impressions on our minds, we may be permitted modestly to ask, "Why, amidst the numerous works which daily issue from the press, has not a course of Lectures, illustrative of the Pilgrim's Progress, found a place?" Had such been the case, it is more than probable that these Lectures would never have seen the light. As no such work has hitherto been published, they will soon appear in print. May they answer the expectations which kind and valued friends have formed of them;—may their tendency be to remind us that, like Christian, Faithful, and Hopeful, we are strangers and pilgrims in the world, and that, like them, proving faithful unto death, we shall, with them, share the blessings of eternity!

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